INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI®
NOTE TO USERS

This reproduction is the best copy available.

UMI®
RICE UNIVERSITY

THE HERCULES MYTH IN RENAISSANCE POETRY AND PROSE

by

COMPTON REES, JUNIOR

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Houston, Texas
May, 1962
For Irmgard
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction ........................................ 1

Chapter I--Background to the Renaissance

1--Classical and Medieval Approaches to the Hercules Myth ............................... 7
2--Medieval Symbolism and Dante ......................................................... 21

Chapter II--The Fourteenth Century Movement Toward the Renaissance

1--Italy: Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Salutati ........................................ 45
2--Medieval Euhemerism and the Survival of Realism ............................. 62
3--Chaucer ..................................................................................... 70

Chapter III--The Fifteenth Century

1--Prolegomena to the Renaissance ......................................................... 90
2--Italy of the Quattrocento ..................................................................... 96
3--Fifteenth Century France .................................................................... 111
4--Fifteenth Century England .................................................................. 114

Chapter IV--Sixteenth Century Italy and France

1--Italy of the Counter-Renaissance ...................................................... 132
2--Renaissance France and the National Myth ...................................... 151

Chapter V--Sixteenth Century England

1--The Allegorical Focus ................................................................. 202
2--The Satiric Attack ............................................................................ 233
3--Euhemerism and the National Theme .............................................. 252
4--Spenser ....................................................................................... 289

Epilogue ............................................................................................. 377
Bibliography ....................................................................................... 383
INTRODUCTION

The Hercules myth has had a long and distinguished literary history, to which this study will add another footnote. In these pages following we shall pursue the figure of Hercules from Greece to Rome to the Middle Ages and thence throughout the Renaissance world—our journey will be somewhat hasty in the first chapters, but once within the chronological limits of 1400-1600 the text shall linger on the Herculean vistas of Renaissance Italy, France, and England. The goals of this study will be three-fold: First, to establish the traditional interpretative contexts within which Hercules was seen in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; secondly, to trace the appearances of Hercules in the Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and thereby to note to what extent these interpretative contexts were applied; and lastly to suggest, in light of the evidence gathered, a tentative clarification of what the Renaissance attitudes were toward pagan mythology and why the chronological limits 1400-1600 are appropriate to designate the core of the "Renaissance."

We shall here be primarily concerned with the Hercules myth as it appears in Renaissance non-dramatic poetry and prose. This is admittedly an arbitrary decision, for Renaissance drama and its kindred form the masque contain a plethora of references to mythological matter, including the figure of Hercules, but the decision can perhaps be
justified for the following reasons: First, Hercules in the drama has been recently studied in Eugene M. Waith's *The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare and Dryden* (New York, 1962); secondly, I do not think the dramatic references to Hercules would noticeably alter my conclusions, for I have attempted to examine as wide a range of references and contexts as possible; and lastly, on purely practical grounds, with the addition of the drama this study would reach beyond any reasonable or manageable bounds. Any student of mythology in the Renaissance is faced with a challenging abundance of material; to include further references would make this dissertation appear much more a rapid survey than an attempt to present Hercules in his most significant interpretative contexts.

"Myth" is a fashionable term in modern literary criticism. It is perhaps necessary therefore to point out here in what ways this word will be used in this study. Though myth will be applied specifically to classical mythology and to Hercules as a mythological hero, "mythic" connotations of the Hercules myth and the mythopoeic practice of the poet are related considerations that here require further clarification.

Modern mythicists, both artists and critics alike, are concerned with myths not simply as given legends from the past that exist within our literary heritage. Not the myth but rather the myth-making process, of which the myth is the result, is the central issue. For modern man,
separated from a communal faith and aware of pathetic isolation in a world of flux, the primitive man's attempt to bridge the gap between man and God through ritual myths is particularly appealing. Myths can be seen as the attempts of primitive man to shape and structure the unknown world of mystery about him; a myth thus celebrates man's links with the Divine. The myth-maker, moreover, creates a narrative that in its own structure bridges the gap between the objective imagistic world of reality and the world of meaning. The myth narrative, that is, gives shape and meaning to spiritual experience; it is essentially a symbolic narrative, or an allegory, that serves to establish organic relationships between literal image and conceptual meaning. But these mythic narratives, though they celebrate man's contact with the mysterious forces surrounding him, are still created by the poet or by the communal society. Myths remain essentially artistic constructs that verify the harmonious and unified pattern of existence, and the myth-maker as a divinely inspired poet reveals the ways of God to man.

Many modern artists and critics, faced with a world of mechanistic knowledge and Cartesian dualism, have attempted to reintegrate the world of experience and celebrate the unity of poetic art through a reemphasis on the mythopoeic imagination. The "mythic" poet is one whose art reaffirms the unity of the experiential world. Like the primitive myth-maker he structures the world of
spiritual experience through the symbolic artistic creations of his imagination. In doing so he reaches beyond the world of mechanistic logic and denotative language to encompass the irrational realms of dream and desire. These images of the artist are thus archetypal—they are revelatory of the essential nature of experience and thereby have universal significance, though the reality of their particular poetic context is in no way denied. Both the image and its archetypal meaning are real through the intuitive power of the creative artist.

In our investigation here we will be concerned with the mythopoeic imagination, for the view of the poet as a creative artist who molds his material in archetypal form is a distinguishing characteristic of Renaissance poetics and helps to distinguish the Renaissance poet from his medieval forebear. In the Middle Ages the artist sees himself within the typological framework of Providence—all present action and existence will reveal their complete potential in the fullness of Time. The role of the medieval artist is thus to celebrate God's Will within His sacramental universe; the world of Dante's Commedia is both historically real and also typologically an adumbration of the historical eschatological future. And even pagan myth can be seen within this typological pattern of existence: the euhemeristic Hercules is a foreshadowing of Christ, and both Hercules and his fulfillment in Christ are historical realities. For the Renaissance poet, however, typological
unity no longer is able to contain the expansive world of secular life. Hercules is real as an archetypal symbol only through the poet's artistic ability to recreate him in his plastic imagination.

My acknowledgments here are gratefully recorded. A study of this scope owes much to the scholars who have charted the way, and I recognize with pleasure my obligations to the studies of Jean Seznec, Erwin Panofsky, Edgar Wind, Marcel Simon, and Douglas Bush, to cite only a few. In particular I thank Richard H. Green for a vigorous appraisal of parts of my text, and Robert E. Hallowell has generously answered a query. The library staffs of Rice University, the University of Texas, and the University of Connecticut have graciously replied to my most exorbitant demands.

My readers have been patient and firm, and I owe them sincere thanks. Their advice has in large measure helped to clarify my organization and arguments and to erase glaring blemishes of style—to Professors Carroll Camden, Wilfred S. Dowden, and Louis Mackay I am humbly indebted. I would like especially to express gratitude here to Professor Camden, who has encouraged me throughout my graduate studies in more ways than I can hope to repay.

To Professor Jackson I. Cope, my director, this dissertation owes its conception and being, though none of its faults. He has endured my vagaries and channeled my energies with patient calm; for those obstinate errors yet
remaining he is not to blame. My debts to Professor Cope as a demanding scholar, inspiring teacher, and friend are not limited to these pages.

My wife, to whom this study is dedicated, has labored as mightily as I. Her persistence and willingness to sacrifice have been models for my own efforts, and her encouragement has never flagged. Acknowledgments of this sort can only be pointed to, never fully expressed.
CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND TO THE RENAISSANCE

1

To attempt an adequate survey of the Hercules myth as it appears in ancient literature and art would be, in effect, to write a literary history of the classical world. One need only glance at the voluminous classical references used to support Robert Graves' 128 page retelling of the Hercules legends in *The Greek Myths* to realize to what vast extent Hercules became a national hero and worshiped demi-god for the Greek state. Origins of the myth would lead us to the findings of anthropology and comparative religion; but we may cite one early source to indicate possible roots. The Christian apologist Athenagoras, writing to Marcus Aurelius and Commodus in the second century A.D., links Hercules with Chronos in an Orphic creation myth: Hercules as solar hero combines with Chronos the god of time to act as a creative agent of the universe. As Athenagoras recalls the Orphic legend:

According to him /Orpheus/ water was the origin of all things, and from water slime was made; from these two an animal was born, a dragon with a lion's head added (and also a bull's) and between them the face of a god, and its name was Heracles or Chronos. This Heracles produced a monstrous egg which, being filled by the power of its producer, was by friction broken in two. The top half of it was fashioned into Heaven and the lower part became Earth, while from inside there came forth a two-bodied hermaphrodite god. Heaven
impregnated Earth and begot daughters—Clotho, Lachesis, Atropos; and sons—Cottos of the hundred hands, Gyges, 2 Briareus, and the Cyclopes—Brontes, Steropes, and Arges.

From this most ancient myth we pass on in Greek literature to the Homeric hymn to Heracles the Lion-Hearted, to the poem "Shield of Heracles" written at the time of Hesiod, to the Pindaric Odes, to an extant fragment of Aeschylus' Heracleidai, to Sophocles' Trachiniae, Philoctetes, and the lost satyr plays Heracles and The Infant Heracles, and of course to Euripides' Alcestis, Heracleidae, and Heracles. Aristophanes burlesques the familiar figure of Hercules as an epic glutton in Peace (1. 741) and in the Birds, whereas the moral Choice of Hercules, a pictorial and textual motif that recurs with great frequency in the Renaissance, originates with Xenophon's retelling of the discourse of Prodicas the sophist. The Choice of Hercules has been traced in prototype as far back as Hesiod's Theogony. By the time of Aristotle the mass of Heracleid epics is widespread enough to be commented on in the Poetics (VIII.51a.19-22). In Latin literature the situation is much the same. Plautus' Amphitryon, Book VIII of the Aeneid, the elegies of Propertius, Book IX of Ovid's Metamorphoses, Seneca's Hercules Furens and Hercules Oetaeus—these are only major literary moments in a literary history of the Hercules myth that must also include Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, Hyginus, Theocritus, Apollodorus, Pausanias, Plutarch, Aelian, Lucian, Cicero, Pliny, and numerous others.
Though I can hardly attempt a literary history of such Herculean proportions here, there is a significant development in the early classical treatment of the Hercules myth that portends its later transmission into medieval and Renaissance culture. Arnold Toynbee has noted in *A Study of History*, VI (1939), 466-9, that the early representations of the Greek Hercules move from the burlesqued buffoon of Aristophanes' *Birds* and the satyr plays to the divine hero of Euripides' *Hercules*. Later, with Prodicus' fable of Hercules' Choice and the moral ideal of Hercules propounded by the Cynic philosophers Antisthenes and Diogenes, Hercules became recognized as the exemplary Stoic hero and was so glorified in the tragedies of Seneca and such moral allegorical interpretations of the Herculean labors as that of Dion Chrysostom. A similar development of allegorical interpretations can be traced in connection with other classical mythological figures. Scholars have noted attempts to justify the scandalous Homeric gods through allegorical interpretations as far back as Pherecydes of Syros, born c. 600 B.C.; allegorical commentary is continuous throughout the classical period with such advocates as Heraclitus, Pythagoras, Maximus of Tyre, and the Neo-Platonists. Allegory, as J. Tate suggests, "grew up gradually with the gradual growth of the more conscious, more scientific use of mythical language to express religious and philosophic speculations." The allegorical mode did not therefore appear suddenly as a defense against critics of Homer's
licentious gods but was rather a positive and pervasive approach toward all mythology in a more conscious age; mythology was seen to incorporate hidden truth that was only dimly recognized consciously before. It is small wonder that Hercules, the most powerful and noble of the Greek heroes; was soon glorified and seen in allegorical terms.

Such allegorization of the pagan myths was not, however, without opposition. Marcel Simon, in his valuable *Hercule et le Christianisme* (Paris, 1955), discusses at length the continuing clash between the cult of Hercules and Christian apologists throughout the patristic period. Indeed pagan myth, especially in the form of the allegorized Hercules legends, has continued to confront Christian writers from Justin Martyr to the present day. The pagan gods and demi-gods can be attacked as demonic, as mere men glorified through false popular legends, or as subservient prototypes of the Christian Truth, but they cannot be ignored.

The Patriarchs, such as Justin Martyr and Tertullian, recognized parallels between the Christian story and the Hercules myth only to maintain that the pagan myth was obviously demonically inspired. As Justin admitted:

When, indeed, we assert that the Word, our Teacher Jesus Christ, who is the first-begotten of God the Father, was not born as the result of sexual relations, and that He was crucified, died, arose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, we propose nothing new or different from that which you say about the so-called sons of Jupiter . . .
such as Hercules, who rushed into the flames of the funeral pyre to escape his sufferings. . . . But may such a thought concerning the gods be far from every sound mind, as to believe that Jupiter himself, whom they consider the ruler and creator of all things, was a parricide and the son of a parricide, . . . and that his sons were guilty of similar actions. But, as we have stated above, the wicked demons have done these things.

Though Justin insisted that such myths originate from the Devil, he did not hesitate to elaborate correspondences between the pagan and Christian stories. Through direct confrontation with the classical myths Justin hoped to show that they were actually inventions of the Devil, mimicries of the Christian revelation that were written to cause men to doubt the truth of the Christian story. As Justin explained in his "Dialogue with Trypho":

. . . my knowledge of the Scriptures and my faith in them have been well confirmed by the things which he who is called the Devil counterfeited in the fictions circulated among the Greeks. . . . And when it is asserted that Hercules, the son of Jupiter and Alomena, was strong and traversed the whole earth, and that, after death, he, too, ascended into heaven, ought I not conclude that the Scriptural passage about Christ, "strong as a giant to run His course" [Psalms 18.6], was similarly imitated?

Such a procedure as Justin's was, of course, dangerous. Although the Hercules myth was a demonic invention, yet it was closely analogous to the Christian story and would be continually associated with it in popular minds. Even Justin, in his treatment of the Choice of Hercules as a moral fable, concluded in an unusually sympathetic tone: "But, those who have understood the things that really are good are also unspoiled in virtue. Such persons, every
intelligent man should conclude, were the Christians, the athletes, and those who performed the deeds which the poets narrate of the so-called gods." Justin's correspondences, even though understood as demonically inspired, almost lead him here to equate Christ with such pagan rivals as Hercules.

A different solution, though only superficially so, was to treat the pagan myths euhemeristically or as glorified legends of historical personages. After Euhemerus' romance in about 300 B.C., in which the traditional gods and goddesses were described as ordinary mortals, the euhemeristic or historical interpretation of pagan myth became quite popular. The Patriarch Lactantius, a severe opponent of the Hercules cult, could thus attack its advocates:

Did not Hercules, who is most renowned for his valour, and who is regarded as an Africanus among the gods, by his debaucheries, lusts, and adulteries, pollute the world, which he is related to have traversed and purified? . . . What divinity could there have been in him, who, enslaved to his own vices, against all laws, treated with infamy, disgrace, and outrage, both males and females? . . . [Hercules' labors] are the deeds of a brave and heroic man, but still a man; for those things which he overcame were frail and mortal.

Despite its polemic character for the Church fathers, the euhemeristic tradition, like the Christian attack on myth as demonically inspired, served to keep myths before the public. Not only was the myth of Hercules kept alive, but in the necessity to maintain that Hercules was a
historical figure there gradually developed a positive interest in the historicity of the myth and its place in the pattern of universal history. In acknowledging that the man Hercules was accepted as divine by the pagans because of his heroic deeds, these euhemeristic writers were forced to recognize the positive heroic qualities of the mythological figure. Pagan heroes and their deeds now became historical truths to be accepted and mingled with the truths of Old Testament history, as seen in compendia of universal history from Eusebius' *Chronicorum* to Higden's *Polychronicon* and on into histories written in the Renaissance.

To indicate both the widespread development of the Hercules figure throughout the ancient world and the euhemeristic concern for establishment of the hero within a historical framework, we might note here a few early discussions of Hercules and his name. Herodotus' *History* cites two different Hercules figures: an Egyptian god and a Greek hero. Cicero in *De Natura Deorum*, III.16, finds six different Hercules', and Varro, cited in Servius' commentary on the *Aeneid* (VIII.564), discusses forty-three. As Robert Graves says, again reminding us of the distant background of the Hercules myth, "The story of Heracles is, indeed, a peg on which a great number of related, un-related, and contradictory myths have been hung. In the main, however, he represents the typical sacred king of early Hellenic Greece, consort of a tribal nymph, the
Moongoddess incarnate; his twin Iphicles acted as his tanist. This Moongoddess has scores of names, Hera, Athene, Auge, Iole, Hebe, and so forth."  

The name Hercules, classically interpreted as "glory of Hera" because Zeus' wife Hera had been the cause of Hercules' labors and thus of his glory, gradually became more of a generic title for the virtuous hero than a name limited to a single legendary demi-god. Macrobius, writing at the end of the fourth century, thus comments in the *Saturnalia*:

But Hercules, neither, basically does not differ from the sun; for Hercules is that property of the sun that gives to the human race a virtue which elevates it to resemblance with the gods. Do not be led to believe that the son of Alcmene, born at Thebes in Boetia, is the sole or the first one that had been called Hercules: On the contrary, it is the last, after many others, who was judged both worthy of that calling and was honored with that name, because his great fortitude proved him worthy to carry the name of the god who presides over virtue. Besides, Hercules has been also honored as a god in the land of Tyre with the greatest reverence; the Egyptians also worship him in a most sacred and solemn cult, and they venerate him as having his origin beyond traditions, which in their land extend most far into the past; for them, he has not had a beginning.  

The name Hercules has become not only that of a historical personage but also a symbolic title given to any glorious and even spiritual hero, who, as Marcel Simon suggests, "le rend participant de la virtus divine." In this sense the euhemeristic tradition, having established Hercules and other pagan figures in the pattern of universal history and thereby having perpetuated and venerated them as great human
benefactors, became quite useful for political purposes. Herocles' name and significations, which could provide worthy associations not only with the historical past but also with spiritual veneration and legendary valor, were thus attributed to political rulers from Nero to Louis XIV, particularly in Renaissance France and England as we shall later observe.

Related to euhemerism was the adaptation of pagan material into the context of Old Testament typology. The Stoics and Neo-Platonists were not the only advocates of allegorical interpretation—that Christ taught in parables was a common defense for the most recondite allegorical techniques applied to Old Testament narrative throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Scripture, that is, was considered a repository for Divine truths of every sort and was thus to be minutely scrutinized for its hidden meanings. Nor were Christian writers the sole interpreters of the Biblical texts. Philo of Alexandria, attempting to reconcile the Pentateuch with Greek philosophy, chided the Jews for over-literal reading of the Old Testament and extended what was already a long tradition of Judaic allegorical interpretations of sacred writings. In this propensity for allegorical interpretations, which as we have seen can be traced as far back as the early commentators on Homer in the sixth century B.C., the historical events of the Old Testament could be symbolically interpreted as prefigurative of the Christian story. Thus, for example,
the Red Sea or the Jordan that the Hebrews had crossed in order to enter into the Promised Land could be seen as a prefiguration of the Christian baptism that assured access to eternal life. In similar fashion ancient pagan myth, when placed in context with Biblical history in the universal histories, might serve as a source for prefigurative symbols or typology. Through various methods, therefore, early Christian writers sought to confute, displace, and absorb pagan myth. We have mentioned the demonic confutation, the euhemeristic displacement, and the typological absorption of myth; these three approaches to mythology gradually tended to become interrelated and lead to a central focus on the allegorical interpretations of myth as a whole. The polemic attack of the Patriarchs, that is, had served to keep the pagan gods vividly etched in the popular mind as supernatural beings, demons though they might be. In such denunciations of the pagans the correspondences between Christian and pagan story, as in the case of Hercules, were clearly indicated and the analogies drawn by Justin Martyr could, in the hands of Celsus the second century Platonist, become a weapon of attack against Christianity itself. Celsus, by maintaining in A True Discourse that the descents of Hercules, Theseus, and Orpheus into Hell were obvious fables, could attack the death and resurrection of Christ on similar grounds. In rebuttal Origen could only insist that Hercules as a debaucher and effeminate slave to Omphale could not be
compared with Christ, and that any allegorical interpretations must be individually examined. Yet even here Origen indirectly maintained the validity of the Hercules myth when he considered it a historical fact to be associated with the historicity of Christ:

And let the statements of their histories and that of Jesus be carefully compared together. Will Celsus have the former to be true, but the latter, although recorded by eyewitnesses . . . , to be inventions? Now, who is there that . . . would yield his assent at random to what is related of the one, but would rush to the history of Jesus, and without examination refuse to believe what is recorded of him? 25

Such a movement by Christian writers away from demonic to historical causes for explanations of pagan myth, and the resultant establishment of Hercules and others in universal histories, brought about in its turn, as has been noted, the application of Old Testament typology to pagan material. The Hercules figure could thus, by the beginning of the Middle Ages, be seen symbolically in various terms: as a symbol of supernatural power, as a morally allegorized Stoic hero, and as a historical personage prefigurative of Christian truth.

Such interpretations of pagan myth persist throughout the medieval period. Yet another presentation of Hercules, as a figure in the astral heavens, can only be briefly alluded to here. Jean Seznec has thoroughly traced the continued presence of the pagan gods in astrological context throughout the Middle Ages—the figure of Hercules is
never lost from the heavens, though he may have been portrayed in astrological texts for the most part in Oriental garb and did not regain his classical attire until the time of Dürer. Hercules appears of course as Egonasins or Eidolon, or the "Phantom on his knees," noted in treatises as early as that of Aratus' Phaenomena (written c. 275 B.C.). The Kneeler, or Hercules at the moment when he slew the serpent who guarded the apples of the Hesperides, is a familiar figure in medieval and Renaissance astrology; even Dylan Thomas may have called upon the tradition, as Elder Olson suggests, in the sonnet sequence, "Altarwise by owl-light." The figure of the Kneeler, as Aratus had described it, "seems to sit on bended knee, and from both his shoulders his hands are upraised and stretch, one this way, one that, a fathom's length. Over the middle of the head of the crooked Dragon, he has the tip of his right foot" (ll. 66-70). Here too the symbolic connotations of the myth seem apparent; one thinks of Milton's crucified and resurrected Christ, whose crucifixion:

Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms, And fix far deeper in his head thir stings Than temporal death shall bruise the Victor's heel.

The mainstream of Herculean interpretation in the Middle Ages and Renaissance deals with Hercules as the hero of the labors and the Choice, however, with the central emphasis on moral allegory and euhemerism, and it is with these
two interpretative traditions that we shall be most concerned.

In terms of moral allegory Hercules appears throughout the Middle Ages. We find the hero of virtue and fortitude in Servius' lengthy fourth century commentary on the *Aeneid*, Fulgentius' philosophic allegorizations in his *Mythologiae* and *Virgiliana Continentia* (beginning of the sixth century), the etymological allegories in Isidore of Seville's seventh century *Etymologiae*, and of course in the allegorizations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* suggested by Theodulphe, bishop of Orleans (c. 755-821), and later expanded in the twelfth and thirteenth century commentaries of Arnolphe of Orleans and John of Garland. A lengthy treatise *Liber Imaginum Deorum*, also known as *Poetarium* or *Scintillarium*, was written about 1200 by an Albric or "Mythographus III," who has been tentatively identified with the English philosopher Alexander Neckham. Here Hercules and his labors are allegorized in more detail, along with other pagan figures. Of central importance are the early fourteenth century prose *Ovidius Moralizatus* of Pierre Bersuire (or Berchorius) and the fifteenth book French verse allegorization of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* entitled the *Ovide Moralisé*. Bersuire's work, originally to be the fifteenth book of his *Reductorium Morale*, contained a convenient mythographical introduction and was printed separately under erroneous attribution to Thomas Waleys as early as 1509; it was also the basis for the *Libellus de Imaginibus Deorum* (c. 1400),
in which Hercules' twelve labors are dealt with separately and without the earlier allegorical commentaries of Ber-suire or of its predecessor Albricus. The euhemeristic tradition can be traced through the universal histories, the Etymologiae of Isidore of Seville, and the numerous contexts in which Hercules was linked with the founding of dynastic houses and national states, especially in France. But medieval euhemerism not only incorporated pagan myth, it typologized it. The Patriarchal attack on the Hercules myth as a work of Satan had been necessary when Christianity was actively clashing with pagan cults, but once Christian culture became dominant this argument receded in importance. Medieval man, as we have seen, absorbed the pagan background into his Christian orientation: Hercules was now a historical dynastic figure, a symbol of virtue through his heroic deeds, a precursor of Christ. Yet, though pagan myth had been assimilated, it had not been equated with Christian Truth. Hercules-Christ analogies did not therefore establish Hercules as Christ. One need only glance at medieval art to note how Hercules has been absorbed into medieval culture—as a grotesquely garbed Christian warrior. To fully understand the medieval attitude toward Hercules and pagan myth as historical realities in a typological context we must here take note of the medieval symbolic mode, as illustrated in Dante.
The medieval propensity for allegory and allegorical commentary is well-known, but in the Middle Ages there was a distinction between what can be called the "allegory of poets" and the "allegory of theologians," or between fictive and figural allegory. Dante's letter to Can Grande, written to dedicate the *Paradiso*, points out clearly that the *Commedia* is to be understood as an allegorical work:

... the meaning of this work is not of one kind only; rather the work may be described as "polysemous," that is, having several meanings; for the first meaning is that which is conveyed by the letter, and the next is that which is conveyed by what the letter signifies; the former of which is called literal, while the latter is called allegorical, or mystical.  

Dante's statement does not seem unusual and might apply to any allegorical narrative, but the author then goes on to elaborate his meaning with the illustration of the Exodus story from the Old Testament, to which he designates four distinct levels of meaning: literal (the historical truth of the Exodus story), allegorical (the general truth of man's redemption through Christ), tropological (the moral truth of the soul's conversion from sin to a state of grace), and anagogical (the ultimate truth of the soul's passage from earth to heavenly glory). This four-fold interpretative method had wide currency in the Middle Ages; schoolboys could grasp the basic approaches through the familiar saying:
Dante's use of the Exodus story as an illustration of allegory points to Scriptural typology rather than to poetic allegory as a clue to the *Commedia*. The difference lies in the historicity of the literal text: In theological allegory or typology the literal Scriptural text is itself historical truth, a prior work of God's own hand; in poetic allegory the literal text is a fiction, an imaginative construction of the artist.

To illustrate the emphasis on the historicity of the literal text in Scriptural interpretation we need turn only to Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, whose statements on exegesis echo similar stresses on the literal text by Augustine and Hugh of St. Victor, among many others:

Since the literal sense is that the author intends, and since the author of Holy Scripture is God, Who by one act comprehends all things by His intellect, it is not unfitting, as Augustine says [see *Confessions*, XII, 317], if, even according to the literal sense, one word in Holy Scripture should have several senses.

The multiplicity of these senses does not produce equivocation or any other kind of multiplicity, seeing that these senses are because the things signified by the words can be themselves signs of other things. Thus in Holy Scripture no confusion results, for all the senses are founded on one—the literal—from which alone can any argument be drawn. . . . The parabolical sense is contained in the literal, for by words things are signified properly and figuratively. Nor is the figure itself, but that which is figured, the literal sense. When Scripture speaks of God's arm, the literal sense is not that God has such a member, but only what is signified by this member, namely, operative power. Hence it is plain that nothing false can ever belie the literal sense of Holy Scripture.37
For Aquinas the literal Scriptural text is revelatory of allegorical meanings without in any way denying its particularity as a historical truth. Scripture must at times include poetical figures to be accommodated to men's understanding, as Aquinas notes above with "God's hand," but these poetical figures merely point to the historical reality of God's Scriptural revelation.

The approach of typological symbolism to Scripture, by which the literal world of the Old Testament or the Song of Songs was seen to reveal God's inmost wisdom and mysteries, could also be focused on pagan myth, with a similar emphasis on the historicity of the literal text. In fact, the medieval symbolic outlook as a whole has been characterized as a form of "insight symbolism" whereby literal image and conceptual meaning interpenetrate, both image and meaning being equally real and revelatory. The sacramental view of the universe, as Henry Osborn Taylor noted years ago, permeated medieval Christian culture; God's book was not only the Scriptures but also the created world of man and nature that revealed God's Divine Plan. Within this sacramental context pagan myth, when recognized in Christian garb, could participate in the drama of Christian existence. Hercules as an euhemeristic hero and a typological figura of Christ could remain both historically real and symbolically valid at the same time.

The medieval typological view of Hercules, however, must remain distinct from more modern theories of symbol
and myth. M.M. Ross has lucidly pointed out the difference between a dogmatic Christian symbol—sacramental, existential, historical—and a symbol created by the mythopoetic imagination of the artist. As he says, "The post-Kantian philosophy of symbolism, though bent on scanning the highest heavens of poetic vision, accords to this vision a psychological rather than ontological validity. In such thought the universe of poetry and the universe of religion are alike construed as pure emanations of the myth-making faculty" (p. 21). The medieval Christian artist, that is, works within a given structure of Being. He may attempt to imitate God's creative powers, as Dante attempted to write a typological poem, but he cannot become a creative God in his own right. Whereas the modern symbolist through verbal structures re-creates the world and thereby orders experience, the medieval symbolist acts under Divine authority to maintain an established sacramental link between man and God.

The separation between the medieval artist within the womb of typological or figural unity and modern artist struggling to encompass his world in mythic form is wide enough to present limits within which this dissertation will probe. The Renaissance in this context remains an era of transition, bounded on one hand by traditions emanating from the medieval theological world of order and on the other by challenges from the new secular world of modern science and progress. In the Renaissance the poet writing
of mythological matter, especially of Hercules, is challenged by increasingly secularized and critical humanist forces about him: He can maintain his role as a typological symbolist, that is, only by a conscious individual effort of his imagination, his creative art. No longer is Hercules explicitly contained within a Christian medieval context; in the Renaissance the late medieval emphasis on Hercules as either a realistically portrayed euhemeristic hero or as a symbolic figure of virtue leaves a gap between image and meaning that must be consciously closed by the poet. The Renaissance artist will perforce become more of a mythopoeic artist.

To present our terminus a quo we might look more closely at the example of Dante as a medieval poet. Dante's case is particularly interesting here because his use of realism seems to anticipate the Renaissance interest in the realistic image, and also because Dante himself was aware of the "allegory of poets." In the Convivio, commenting on his Canzoni, Dante cites the familiar four-fold levels of meaning, with characteristic emphasis on the literal sense, but notes further:

... the second sense is called allegorical, and this is disguised under the cloak of such stories, and is a truth hidden under a beautiful fiction. Thus Ovid says that Orpheus with his lyre made beasts tame, and trees and stones move towards himself; that is to say that the wise man by the instrument of his voice makes cruel hearts grow mild and humble, and those who have not the life of Science and of Art move to his will, while they who have no rational life are as it were like stones. ... Theologians indeed do not apprehend the sense in the same
fashion as poets; but, inasmuch as my intention is to follow here the custom of poets, I will take the allegorical sense after the manner which poets use.\textsuperscript{41}

Dante's distinction here between the allegory of poets, in which the literal text is a "beautiful fiction," and the allegory of theologians, in which the literal text is a historical truth, has become a source for strong controversy among recent Dante scholars. The late Erich Auerbach, in a seminal essay on "Figura" in 1938, traced the development of Scriptural typological interpretation through the Middle Ages, with emphasis on Dante. Auerbach's position was thus that Dante's realism could be seen in terms of the typically Christian figural or typological view of the literal world. The exterior world of appearance and of universal history could be seen in eternal context, as a prefiguration of the Christian truth, so that everyday reality, though maintaining its temporal historicity, became at the same time eternally true and timeless. In God's intellect, as Aquinas had pointed out, all is a simultaneous present. The figural interpretation of history, in which all past history is fulfilled in the Christian story, thus established a vertical or spatial link between the historical "figure" and its fulfillment, rather than a horizontal or temporal causal connection.\textsuperscript{42} All human action, as in medieval drama, could be presented within the historical and yet Divine context of Christian world history, determined by the Fall, Passion, and Last Judgment.
Such a symbolic perspective toward external life, however, did not deny its historical reality. As Auerbach stated succinctly:

... a figural schema permits both its poles—the figure and its fulfillment—to retain the characteristics of concrete historical reality, in contra-distinction to what obtains with symbolic or allegorical personifications, so that figure and fulfillment—although the one "signifies" the other—have a significance which is not incompatible with their being real. An event taken as a figure preserves its literal and historical meaning. It remains an event, does not become a mere sign. ... Medieval symbolism and allegorism are often, as we know, excessively abstract, ... but far more prevalent in the Christian life of the High Middle Ages is the figural realism which can be observed in full bloom in sermons, the plastic arts, and mystery plays ...; and it is this figural realism which dominates Dante's view.⁴⁴

For Auerbach, then, the figural view explains Dante's realism in the Commedia. Dante is dealing with the world beyond, the world of fulfillment in which the reality of earthly life is intensified and characters reveal their real natures in concentrated form. But Dante's dynamic realism, however, tends also to overpower its eternally symbolic situation. As Auerbach notes, "The result is a direct experience of life which overwhelms everything else, a comprehension of human realities which spreads as widely and variously as it goes profoundly to the very roots of our emotions."⁴⁵

Dante's realism, in fact, may be as much due to his poetic nature as to his Christian orientation. As his comments in the Convivio suggest, he may be writing the allegory of poets rather than the allegory of theologians.
Professor Charles S. Singleton, following Auerbach, has maintained stoutly that Dante is within the figural or typological tradition of Biblical exegesis, and that his statement in the Convivio only reflects his interests in the Canzoni and not in the later Commedia. The structure of the Commedia, for Singleton, is modelled on both the symbolic dimension of God's created world and the allegoric, figural dimension of God's Scriptural narrative, with each of these dimensions being both literally and symbolically true, both "this and that" in the focus of single vision. Dante's literal journey is a prefiguration of the true way to God, through the Incarnation, and both literal journey and the journey of fulfillment are true in fact. This "allegory of theologians" view, however, has been challenged recently by Richard H. Green. Green maintains that the "allegory of poets" for the Middle Ages, which had assimilated pagan myth into its figural context, was accepted practice for the revelation of divine truth. Dante creates the illusion of historical reality in his literal sense, but his realism is a product of his poetic practice rather than of his figurative historical faith. The separation between these points of view of Singleton and Green is distinct. Singleton presents the extreme of the figural position, in which the allegory of poets is seen to deal only with inferior and essentially false fiction; Green asserts the extreme of the "poetic" position, in which the medieval poet is disengaged in his art from any figural
or typological faith. Dante's literal realism is seen by Singleton in light of a past medieval theological tradition, by Green in light of a future Renaissance poetic practice. The debate between Singleton and Green has not yet been adequately resolved, though numerous other scholars have joined the fray. Morton Bloomfield and E. Talbot Donaldson in recent statements have questioned the degree of medieval interest in symbolism, which serves as a cornerstone for both Singleton's "allegory of theologians" and Green's "allegory of poets." Though these scholars are quite right to caution us against over-hasty hunting for symbolic meanings and neglect of the literal text, one cannot ignore the exegetical traditions, allegorical art, and symbolic correspondences pervasive throughout medieval culture. As another alternative, not to implicitly deny both Singleton and Green but rather to effect a compromise between their opposing view, Bernard Stambler has suggested that Dante is both a medieval typologist and a poetic fictionalist at the same time. Dante's allegory, for Stambler, is an extension of the poet's artistic approach to realism—the literal journey in the poem is a poetic fiction in its selected details, but yet the journey as a whole deals with essential reality; there is a movement in the poem from the fictive "allegory of poets" to the historical "allegory of theologians." Professor Stambler's attempt at compromise is commendable, but his view of Dante working on fictional details independent
of an overriding awareness of historical reality tends to obscure the central issue, as propounded by Auerbach:
Is Dante's emphasis on realism able to be incorporated within a figural view of existence?

The question of Dante's realism and his own statements of allegorical method have been major problems for modern Dante scholarship. The controversy is relevant also to our investigation, for Dante's position at the beginning of the fourteenth century, and the confrontation of the allegory of the theologians with that of the poets, are of pivotal concern in the gradual movement from a medieval to a Renaissance view of classical myth.

Dante's realism may be seen within a figural context, but, as Auerbach suggests, this medieval figural "omnipresent temporalness" can barely include Dante's massive realistic characterizations. As Auerbach says, "Figure surpasses fulfillment, or more properly: the fulfillment serves to bring out the figure in still more impressive relief. . . .

All through the poem there are instances in which the effect of the earthly figure and its earthly destiny surpasses or is suberved by the effect produced by its eternal situation." Dante's realism is still held tenuously within a religious context of figural interpretation; with the humanists Petrarch and Boccaccio, however, the realistic portrayals begin to stretch beyond figural boundaries.

Auerbach has, quite rightly, associated medieval realism with the religious drama and popular sermons of
the period, that is, with Biblical literature and saints' legends treated in figural context; but such realism is not evident in the depictions of pagan myth figures such as Hercules. As Sezne, Panofsky, and other art historians have shown, pagan myth in the Middle Ages is Christianized and purposely distorted, so that there is a separation between classical subject matter and classical image up to the fourteenth century Italian humanists. For the Christian Middle Ages the Hercules myth has polysemous and yet literal truth only if explicitly depicted in Christian terms. For the Renaissance, however, Hercules is a transparent symbol; his myth can be realistically presented because, in its literal classical form, it is an essential revelation of divine truth, an archetypal symbol of both Christ and of heroic man himself.

Within the medieval schema of figural world history, as we have noted, the scriptural world of the past has both literal or temporal and symbolic or timeless dimensions. As Singleton says, it is "both this and that." The pagan world of the past, insofar as it was incorporated into the universal histories, was similarly seen in dual vision, but with an essential difference: Literary realism is consistently subordinated to symbolic meaning, and the myth's historicity is accepted not as classical antiquity presented it but rather as the medieval mind interpreted it. Classical myth is timeless and true, that is, when it has been shaped and cleansed by allegorical interpretation.
and the omission of purely pagan elements. This refusal to see classical myth in its own right, in a unity of classical image and meaning, can be explained by the lack of historical perspective under an inclusive view of figural history: The classical past is not seen as a completed and distinct phenomenon. Too, there is the lingering defensive antagonism toward pagan myth by Christian writers. The separation between classical subject and classical form was not to be closed effectively until the Renaissance saw the classical world as an isolated age in time.

To illustrate more specifically Dante's figural approach and to bring our general discussion of classical myth down to its Herculean particulars, one might note Dante's own treatment of the Hercules figure. The references to the myth are incidental, for the most part, but they uniformly point to the same implicit interpretation: Hercules is to be seen as a prototype of Christ and his labors are victories over evil.

Significantly, I think, Hercules does not appear as a personal figure in the Commedia, though various of his opponents are congregated in the Inferno. As Dante and Virgil stand before the gate of the City of Dis, the angelic messenger appears to berate the demons:

O cacciati del ciel, gente dispetta,
comincio egli in su l'orribil soglia,
"ond' esta oltracotanza in voi s'allette? . . .
Che giova nelle Fata dar di cozzo?
Cerbero vostro, se ben vi ricorda,
ne porta ancor pelato il mento e il gozzo.

(Inferno IX. 91-3, 97-9)

Here, as Maroel Simon has noted, the prior descent of Hercules into Hell, when he dragged Cerberus to the upper world, prefigures the later descent of Christ. Later in the Inferno (XII.67-9, 98-139) we see Nessus among the centaurs, associated with those who have committed violence against other men. In a later canto Cacus, the robber of Hercules' cattle, appears prominently among the group of thieves after "cessar le sue opere biece / sotto la mazza d'Ercole, che forse / gliene die cento" (Inferno XXV.31-3). Finally the giant Antaeus, close to the deepest pit of Hell, is instrumental in setting Virgil and Dante down in the Ninth and Last Circle (Inferno XXI.112-45), and we note that the Hercules-Antaeus struggle, allegorized as the victory of Virtue over Earth-bound Vice, or of Christ over Satan, was familiar to Dante from the allegorized Ovid. In De Monarchia we further find Dante defending the medieval concept of trial by ordeal of single combat by recalling the examples of David and Goliath and of Hercules and Antaeus; those such as Hercules can overcome any earthly giant, "for it were a foolish thing indeed to hold that the strength that God sustains is weaker than a chance champion" (II.x.89-91).

In the Paradiso Hercules is referred to in a somewhat different context. In Canto IX the troubadour and later
Bishop Folco recalls his amorous youth:

ché più non arse la figlia di Belo,
noiando ed a Sicheo ed a Creusa,
di me, in fin che si convenne al pelo;

ne quella Rodopeia, che delusa
fu da Demofoonte, nè Alcide
quando Iole nel cor ebbe richiusa.

(IX.97-102)57

But, Folco continues, in heaven there is no repentance.
The sin of sensual love for Folco (and Hercules) is only
to be seen as a stage of being, as a prefigural reality
that is intensified and fulfilled in heaven as Divine Love:

Non però qui si pente, ma si ride,
non della colpa, ch'a mente non torna,
ma del valor ch' ordinò e provide.

Qui si rimira nell' arte che adorna
cotanto effetto, e discernesi il bene
per che al mondo di su quel di giù torna.

(IX.103-8)58

We are here close to the later Neo-Platonic interpretation
of Hercules' death by Castiglione and others: The sensual
love for Iole, which precipitated Deianeira's jealousy
and Hercules' eventual death, leads to the separation of
Hercules' body and soul on the burning pyre on top Mt.
Oeta, with the sensual earthly body remaining in ashes
while the divine spirit rises to heavenly glory and Divine
Love.

Outside of the Commedia Hercules appears in letters
and in a Canzone attributed to Dante. In a letter to
Emperor Henry VII, dated April 17, 1311, Dante in exile urges the Emperor to bring peace to Italy and to Florence. Christ's legacy of peace is in the hands of Satan; protection of a just king has been desperately needed, and the recent arrival of Henry in Italy portends the Second Coming, "the rising of the long-awaited Sun," the reign of Saturn (VII.i.). When Dante earlier saw Henry, the epitome of Imperial Majesty, "Then my spirit rejoiced within me, when I said secretly within myself: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world" (VII.ii.44-47). Yet Henry does not come to Florence, the source of evil and discord. Dante in his appeal associates the Christian Henry with Hercules and his battle against the Hydra, bringing once more the pagan myth into a Christian context:

Through the spring as through the winter dost thou linger at Milan, thinking to extirpate the pestiferous hydra by cutting off its heads? But, if thou hadst turned thy thoughts back to the mighty deeds of glorious Alcides, thou wouldst perceive that thou, like him, art deceiving yourself; for the noisome beast, as its ever-multiplying heads sprouted again, grew stronger through the loss, until the hero in good earnest attacked the seat of life itself. (VII.vi.114-21)

The letter ends with a stirring plea for action from Henry, the Christian monarch, with a David-Goliath analogy that recalls Dante's Hercules-David association in De Monarchia:

Up then! make an end of delay, thou new scion of Jesse and take confidence from the eyes of the Lord God of Hosts, in whose sight thou strivest; and overthrow this Goliath with the sling of thy wisdom and with the stone of thy strength. . . . (VII.viii.177-80)
Hercules appears again in Christian context in a **Canzone** that has been attributed to Dante. Here, as Marcel Simon notes, the poet calls to Hercules to return again to save the world; in the poem immediately following he addresses a similar plea to the Virgin Mary and her Son, with parallel liturgical phrasing in both instances.

In all of these Herculean references Dante is of characteristic medieval temper: His typological or figural interpretations of Hercules absorb the pagan figure into a Christian context, even when Hercules and Iole are alluded to in the **Paradiso**. Dante's emphasis with Hercules is still on typology and the "allegory of the theologians."

Yet if Dante is committed as a Christian poet to a figural view of the world, his massive realism as a whole does itself give an insight into future poetic practice. Before Dante the allegory of the theologians and Christian distortion of myth predominate; after Dante the allegory of the poets and mythic realism begin to seep through medieval barriers. Though Professor Singleton is undoubtedly right to consider Dante as a medieval symbolist, yet Dante's interest in realistic detail foreshadows the vigorous awareness to be played out on the Renaissance stages of Ronsard, Spenser, and Shakespeare. Dante stands, in medieval grandeur, at a watershed of literary history.
NOTES


4 Simon, pp. 78-83, associates the rise of Herculean deification with the beginnings of Christology and suggests that this "Herculean theology" is possibly a pagan defense against a rising and militant Christianity. For an example of early Herculean allegorization, see T.B.L. Webster, "Personification as a Mode of Greek Thought," JWCI, XVII (1954), 13.


6 J. Tate, Classical Review, XLI (1927), 215.
7 I must acknowledge my indebtedness here to the major scholarly studies that have allowed us to follow the shifting attitudes toward pagan myth, and especially the Hercules myth, through the Middle Ages: Jean Seznec, The Survival of the Pagan Gods; R.R. Bolgar, The Classical Heritage and its Beneficiaries (Cambridge, 1954), especially pp. 216-29; Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl, "Classical Mythology in Medieval Art," Metropolitan Museum Studies, IV (1932-33), 228-80; E. Panofsky, Hercules am Scheideweg, Studien der Bibliothek Warburg, XVIII (Leipzig, 1930); M. Simon, Hercule et le Christianisme.

Professor Simon's central thesis is that there was a continual interplay between the Herculean cult and Christology in the medieval period. This interplay would begin with the Patriarchal polemic attack against the Stoic deification of Hercules and would be continued in the establishment of both Hercules and Christ as Logos and as embodiments of a heavenly Sun God-King. On medieval sun symbolism, see H. Flanders Dunbar, Symbolism in Medieval Thought (New Haven, 1929), pp. 129-52, espec. 144-8), followed in turn by the later medieval typological associations of Samson-Hercules, Jonah-Hercules and the final Christ-Hercules fusions of Dante and Ronsard. For further discussions of Hercules-Christ parallels from the standpoint of cultural historians see Friedrich Pfister "Herakles and Christus," Archiv fur Religionswissenschaft, XXXIV (1937), 42-60, and Toynbee, A Study of History, VI (Oxford, 1939), 376-540, espec. 465-76.


9 Justin, "Dialogue with Trypho," Ibid., Chap. 69, p. 259 (PG, VI.635-9); see also "The First Apology," Chap. 54, pp. 91-3, and Chap. 64, p. 104.

10 Justin, "The Second Apology," Ibid., Chap. 11, p. 131 (PG, VI.441-70).


12 Lactantius, "The Divine Institutes," ed. A.C. Coxe,

14 Rathborne, p. 94.

15 Graves, I, 88.

16 See Graves, I, 86, 88 n. 6, for classical references to this etymology. Rathborne, pp. 99-101, discusses this movement from name to generic title. Allegorical commentary attached to the etymology of names can be found as early as Plato's Cratylus.


18 Simon, p. 85. E. Panofsky, Hercules am Scheideweg, pp. 153-4, reminds us, however, that though there were many allegorizations of pagan gods throughout medieval art, there were no depictions of virtus itself as a separate figure. Such a figure would lead the audience back to the moralized Virtue of the pagans, whereas only Christ or God could represent true "Virtue."

19 See Pépin, Mythe et Allegorie, pp. 25-32, 247-475; Seznec, pp. 87-8; Simon, pp. 35-6.


21 Cited by Simon, p. 35, who refers to J. Daniélou, Sacramentum Futuri. Etude sur les Origines de la Typologie
22 Seznec, pp. 16-7; Simon, passim.


24 Origen, Ibid., III.xxii-xxxii, pp. 472-3 (PG, XI.919-1028), and VII.liii-liv, pp. 632-3 (PG, XI.1421-520).


26 Seznec, pp. 37-83, discusses the "physical tradition" at length; the figure of Hercules the Kneeler can be seen in the astrological paintings in figs. 26 and 27 (pp. 77-8). The early Oriental metamorphosis of this figure is shown in fig. 59 (p. 155) and is discussed on pp. 154-5, 185-6, with Dürer's reintegration of Hercules in classical form in fig. 72 (p. 186). For the most thorough discussion of Hercules the Kneeler in medieval art, see Panofsky and Saxl, Metropolitan Museum Studies, IV (1932-3), pp. 232-50, with accompanying figs. 6-24.


31 Seznec, pp. 170-2, 176. The identification of Albriacus with Alexander was made by Hans Liebeschütz, Fulgentius Metaforalis (Leipzig, 1926), pp. 16-8, n. 28.

32 The Ovide Moralisé has been edited by C. de Boer in Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen, afd. Letterkunde, New Series, XV, XXI, XXX, XXXVI-XXVII, XLIII (1915-38). See J. Engels, "Etudes sur l'Ovide moralisé," (diss., Groningen, 1945). Bersuire's Ovidius Moralisatus has been studied by F. Ghisalberti, Studi Romanzi, XXIII (1933), 5-136. The anonymous Libellus de Imaginalibus Deorum is available in edition and in facsimile in Liebeschütz, pp. 117-26 and plates XVI-XXXII. The complex textual history of these various works is discussed by Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences, pp. 78-81, and by Seznec, pp. 170-6.


34 Paget Toynbee, ed. and trans. Dantis Alagherrii


36 "The letter teaches deeds, allegory what you should believe, The moral what you should do, the anagoge whither you are headed."


38 See Dunbar, pp. 8-25.


41 William W. Jackson, trans. Dante's Convivio (Oxford, 1909), II.I, p. 73. For the Italian text, see Le Opere di Dante, ed. by the Società Dantesca Italiana (Firenze, 1921), pp. 171-2.

42 E. Auerbach, "Figura," Archivum Romanicum, XXII (1938), 436-89. This essay was reprinted in Neue Dante- studien (Istanbul, 1944), pp. 11-71, and is available in an English translation by Ralph Manheim in E. Auerbach, Scenes from the Drama of European Literature (New York: Meridian, 1959), pp. 11-76. Auerbach restated and impressively expanded his position in Mimesis: the Representation of Reality in Western Literature (1946), trans. Willard Trask (Princeton,

43 Auerbach, Mimesis (Anchor, 1957), pp. 64-6, 136-41.

44 Ibid., p. 171.


50 Mimesis, pp. 174-5.

51 Panofsky, Meaning in the Visual Arts, pp. 48-54, and more recently, Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art, espec. pp. 108-13, discusses at length this Renaissance reintegration of classical subject matter and motif.

52 As translated by J.A. Carlyle, Dante's La Divina Commedia (London, Temple reprint, 1933), p. 97: "O outcasts of Heaven! race despised!" began he, upon the horrid threshold, "why dwells this insolence in you? . . . What profits it to butt against the Fates? Your Cerberus, if ye remember, still bears his chin and his throat peeled for doing so."
53 Simon, p. 177.

54 "His crooked actions ceased beneath the club of Hercules, who gave him perhaps a hundred blows with it" (p. 277).

55 Dante cites the "Greater Ovid" and Lucan's Pharsalia in other discussions of the Hercules-Antaeus myth. See the Convivio, III.iii.51-60; De Monarchia II.viii.78-83, and II.x.84-91.


57 "For Belus' daughter, wronging alike Sichæus and Creüsa, did not more burn than I, so long as I [his youth in Marseilles] consorted with my locks; nor yet the Rhodopeian maid who was deluded by Demophoön, neither Alcides when he had shut Iole in his heart" (Translated P.H. Wicksteed, Temple reprint, p. 109).

58 "Yet here we not repent, but smile; not at the sin, which cometh not again to mind, but at the Worth that ordered and provided. Here gaze we on the Art that beauti-fieth its so great effect, and here discern the Good which bringeth back the world below unto the world above" (Ibid., p. 109). Thomas Aquinas acknowledges that earthly sins may be remembered, if seen in eternal context; see Summa Theologica, III, Suppl. Q. 88, ed. Romana, V, 534-9.

59 Epistola VII, ed. and trans. P. Toynbee, pp. 82-105. All following references are to this text.

60 Simon, pp. 177-9, discusses this poem and cites an edition by Curt Rothe in Deutsches Dante-Jahrbuch, t. 12, Neue Folge, 3, Weimar, 1930, pp. 133-.
CHAPTER II

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY MOVEMENT TOWARD THE RENAISSANCE

One of the effects of the medieval euhemeristic tradition, as Jean Seznec has pointed out, was to incorporate mythological figures into various genealogies as the ancestral heroic trunks from which modern branches flourished. Hercules thus appears at the end of the thirteenth century on the seal of Florence, replacing John the Baptist as the patron saint of that city. But the association of Hercules with fourteenth century Florence, when we think of Dante, Boccaccio, and Salutati, becomes considerably more important. For it is in fourteenth century Italy, and especially in Florence, that the Hercules myth begins to step out of its context in the universal histories; the critical approach of humanistic scholarship begins to see classical myth in terms of a completed historical past rather than as a simultaneous symbolic present. Though Dante could rely on the figural "allegory of theologians" for justification of Christianized myth within the Commedia, with Petrarch and Boccaccio the use of pagan myth has become more a concern for the "allegory of poets." The encrustations of allegorical interpretation remain part of all mythological accounts—we need note
only the contemporary Ovide Moralisé—but there is now a systematic gathering together of sources into mythological manuals and an emphatic concern with myth that was not as necessary nor desirable for earlier medieval man.

We shall discuss here the concern with the Hercules myth by the fourteenth century Florentine Boccaccio and Salutati, but the movement from Dante to these proto-Renaissance figures really begins with Petrarch. As the late Theodor E. Mommsen has shown us in a recent study, Petrarch resuscitates the motif of the Choice of Hercules from its medieval oblivion; with Petrarch, man, like Hercules, is able to decide his own proper course of action and thus choose his own destiny.

The Choice of Hercules, as we recall, was a tale known from Prodicus in Xenophon's Memorabilia (II.1.21-34), in which the youth Hercules was forced to choose between the paths of Virtue or of Vice, each represented by a suitably stern or enticing female figure. The moral fable was well known to the ancients and was passed on to the Middle Ages in Cicero's De Officiis (I.xxxii.118, III.v.25), but no medieval association of Hercules with his choice has been found until the appearance of Petrarch's De Vita Solitaria (first draft 1346). Both Erwin Panofsky and T.E. Mommsen have indicated two basic causes for this medieval rejection: First, the female allegorical figures of virtus and voluptas were too anthropomorphic for the Christian Middle Ages; secondly, only Christ was allowed to make the Herculean free
moral choice concerning his life's direction. Separate analogous themes persisted throughout the medieval period: The distinction between the broad and narrow paths was current in terms both Christian (Matthew VII.13-4) and Pythagorean (the letter Y symbolized the moral choice in vivio), and the Judgment of Paris appeared in the medieval legends of Troy—but the isolated moral fable of Hercules with his allegorical maidens was not reintroduced in its classical form until the time of Petrarch.

In two distinct passages in De Vita Solitaria (I.iv.2; II.ix.4) Petrarch refers to the Choice of Hercules and, in the latter passage, states that Hercules "spurned the way of pleasure and took possession of the path of virtue, was raised not only to the apex of human glory but even to a reputation of divinity." The indicated shift here from medieval to Renaissance perspective is subtle but significant—Hercules is not longer the Christian precursor in a Christian historical framework, but is rather a virtuous hero who by his own free choice can shape his own ends and determine his own history. Petrarch, though often traditionally medieval in his thought, points here toward the later Renaissance emphasis on the active ideal and the individual hero, free in his innate virtus, who can through his heroic deeds achieve human glory and fame.

Whereas the Middle Ages subordinated the Herculean hero to his euhemeristic position in Christian history, the Renaissance saw Hercules as a heroic figure whose deeds,
morally allegorized, could serve as exempla for man's possible earthly achievement. There is, then, a gradual shift from the medieval theological ideal of ascetic contemplation to the Renaissance moral ideal of heroic action and full involvement in secular life. With the reintroduction of the Choice of Hercules by Petrarch we are leaving behind the world of Dante and the allegory of the theologians and are moving into the dynamic secular exuberance of the Renaissance.

Of course such shifts in literary history are never so dramatically explicit. Dante's poetic realism in the Commedia is theologically justified, though his use of realism undeniably foreshadows the later increased realism of Boccaccio. Similarly, the fourteenth century Italian humanist movement, with its reassertion of classical myth in its literal classical form, has roots long before Petrarch. Furthermore, though the Choice of Hercules is not explicitly evident before Petrarch, it survived in analogous Christian context throughout the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, by the time of Petrarch the indications of a shift from a medieval to a Renaissance viewpoint can be more clearly drawn; reintroduction of the Choice of Hercules in its classical form serves as an appropriate and explicit example to portend future emphases on the life of active heroism and earthly glory for Renaissance man.

Petrarch's other references to Hercules do not detain us here—they consist of an unfinished life of Hercules in
De Viris Illustribus and occasional comments elsewhere --
but we might note Petrarch's descriptions of the pagan
gods in his Latin epic Africa (III, 138-264), composed in
memory of Scipio. Petrarch's omission of any allegorical
justifications for his descriptions of pagans seems a
daring procedure in a secular work, Jean Seznec has traced
Petrarch's sources for his descriptions to Fulgentius'
Liber Mythologiarum and Albricus' De Deis Gentium, but in
Petrarch's poem the allegorical apparatus of his prede-
cessors has disappeared. Though these pagan figures are
later submerged again with allegorical glosses in the
Ovidius Moralizatus of Petrarch's friend Bersuire, Petrarch's
unglossed text goes beyond Dante's figural realism and in-
dicates the sporadic movement toward the more realistic,
sensuous imagery of the Renaissance. By the time of the
anonymous Libellus de Deorum Imaginibus (c. 1400) these same
figures are once more extracted from their allegorical glosses
and are available, as Seznec says, in "a clear text, deter-
mindedly profane and purely iconographical" (p. 176).

To approach our next fourteenth century writer,
Boccaccio, is to move into the sensual, phenomenological
world of the Decameron. Here secular realism dominates--
though the tales may well be within the exemplaristic tradi-
tion of comic hagiography, the real world of earthy comic
humor and intrigue hinders any extensive attempts at
allegorical or figural interpretation. Yet from the
same hand that penned these tales come later Latin humanist
works: *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*, *De Claribus Mulieribus*, *De Montibus*, and *De Genealogia Deorum*. It is these later Latin compilations that established Boccaccio's fame as a scholar throughout the Renaissance world. The *Decameron* was attacked by such sixteenth century men as Vives, Cornelius Agrippa, and Roger Ascham, but Boccaccio's reputation as a scholar was widely heralded: The *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium* was translated by Lydgate and served as a foundation for *A Mirror for Magistrates; De Genealogia Deorum*, the first Renaissance handbook of classical myth, was to be elaborated upon by the later compilations of Conti, Giraldi, and Cartari but never completely superseded throughout the Renaissance.

As with Petrarch, the transitional ambivalence of Boccaccio's position between the wane of the Middle Ages and the rise of the Renaissance disallows any rigid and manifest categorical distinctions. The earthy realism of the *Decameron* and the critical fruits of humanist scholarship exist side by side, both pointing toward the Renaissance. Yet Boccaccio and his contemporaries were not at a loss for traditional medieval justifications of their interests in secular realism and the pagan past: The familiar appeal to symbolic interpretation, apparent in Boccaccio's *De Genealogia* (XV.viii) and elsewhere, defends the pagan poets as theologians who reveal sacred historical truths under the disguise of fictions. This traditional view of poetry as revelatory of disguised truth extends as far back as the
fourth century Macrobius, so that, as some modern scholars insist, Boccaccio and other fourteenth century humanists might be seen here as still within the medieval context of Dante. Yet the insistent defense of secular poetry by these humanists and their concern with the classical past betray attitudes and interests not so markedly evident in Dante and earlier men of the Middle Ages. The works of Petrarch, Boccaccio, and others in the fourteenth century have passed beyond the medieval turning point that Dante represents, but they are not wholeheartedly of the Renaissance temper.

To indicate more specifically Boccaccio's ambivalent position, we might turn to the Hercules references in his later Latin works. The *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium* (written c. 1355-60), translated by Laurent de Premierfait and then by Lydgate as *The Fall of Princes* (c. 1431-8), includes a brief life of Hercules who conquered the world's monsters only to succumb to lust and effeminacy because of desire for his captive Iole. And if Hercules can fall, the author notes, how much more vulnerable is the average man to the temptations of lust. In *De Casibus Virorum* the majority of Boccaccio's references to Hercules center about his unfortunate fall to the malice of woman.

Hercules also appears in the lives of Iole and Deianira in Boccaccio's *De Claris Mulieribus*. This work, which had wide circulation in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a contribution to current controversies over
the importance and place of women, was translated into French, Spanish, German, Italian, and English. Though Hercules does not appear in the first English translation (c. 1440-50), he is evident in the French version of 1538, derived from an early anonymous manuscript of 1401, and in the English translation of Henry Parkers, Lord Morley (c. 1534-47). As indicative of the wide influence of Boccaccio's work, Rosamond Tuve has suggested that Spenser used the 1538 French version of *De Claris Mulieribus* for his *Hercules Iole* or *Artegall-Radigund* relationships in Book V of the *Fairie Queene*; in addition, Lord Morley's English translation was dedicated as a New Year's gift to Henry VIII.

The stories of Iole and Deianeira in *De Claris Mulieribus* present the same Hercules seen in *De Casibus*: The subduer of the world's monsters has fallen to the evils of deceitful love. Here Boccaccio's earlier bitter attack on women has been noticeably modified--Iole acts justifiably from revenge of her father's death and Deianeira is duped by Nessus the centaur--but the evils of sensual love, with its deceitful flattery and lovers' laments, are the main concern. In Morley's translation, which is a close approximation of the Louvain Latin text, Hercules at the spinning wheel in women's clothing is "a very sure argumente of mans imbecillyte and of the crafte and the deceyte of women!" (Wright edition, p. 74). Wanton love, however,
is the basic evil. Despite Iole's desire for revenge she too falls eventually to love's wantonness, for "Thys pestiferus passion is wonte often to assaute the delyciate yonge madyns and also the wanton and idle yonge men, for asmuche as Cupyde allwais is a dispyser of grauyte \[\text{and}\] of delycatnes and excellent maynteyner" (p. 75). Boccaccio's emphasis is upon the danger and fury of Cupid's influence, and though Hercules is a victim of love his greatness as a hero is not denied:

And thus false Cupyde dyd penetrare the harde brest of Hercules and broughte into hym a farr more greate monster then euer he conquere in hys time, which, if he had well remembrede hym self, he wolde not so soone haue left vertuous laboure and taken hymself to idlenes, seynge so greate an ennemye as Cupyde is, dyd so assaute hym. . . . Whereby the greate Hercules shall fall into that detestable seruytude, honourshalbe forgotten, substaunce shalbe waystede, and hate shalbe armyde, often tymes to the greate parelle of our lyfe. (pp. 75, 77)

Morley's translation is an accurate rendering of Boccaccio's original, but the French text of 1538 alters and interpolates and thereby places even more stress upon Hercules' virtuous heroism. In this French version the positive heroic qualities of Hercules are vivid and detailed; we are closer to the virtuous symbolic Hercules of Spenser. Later translators of Boccaccio, that is, enlarge upon Hercules' heroism by expanding the narrative context with more realistic detail. Hercules in his vivid particularity is recognized as a hero, and though his glorious stature is not explicitly defined through allegorical glosses he remains an
implicit symbolic hero, much as he will be presented in the High Renaissance of the Quattrocento.

In this respect Boccaccio himself in both De Casibus Virorum and De Claris Mulieribus can be viewed as a proto-Renaissance man. His concern with pagan myth, and especially with Hercules, is only to maintain a medieval position denouncing the evils of lust and the temptations of women. In this satiric context, however, Hercules appears as more than an exemplum; he is duped by love, but he is presented clearly as a pagan classical hero. There is little attempt to allegorize the text through explicit glosses or Christian emphases, even though the context of the work demands it. The text itself, in its narrative concreteness, presents Hercules in his real classical form and thereby suggests his implicit symbolic significance.

The last Latin work of Boccaccio is his encyclopaedic De Genealogia Deorum, a work that Jean Seznec has called "the chief link between the mythology of the Renaissance and that of the Middle Ages." The mythological treatise is an impressive assembling of all available materials on the classical legends, systematically arranged under the founder of the gods, Demogorgon. To justify such an undertaking, Boccaccio presents his poetic theories at great length in the last two books of De Genealogia: Here we come upon the familiar assertions of poetry as veiled truth, comparable to the sacred Scriptures, with the prophetic poet in his divinely inspired fervor linked to God:
This poetry, which ignorant triflers cast aside, is a sort of fervid and exquisite invention, with fervid expression, in speech or writing, of that which the mind has invented. It proceeds from the bosom of God, and few, I find, are the souls in whom this gift is born. . . . This fervor of poesy is sublime in its effects: it impels the soul to a longing for utterance; it brings forth strange and unheard-of creations of the mind; it arranges these meditations in a fixed order, adorns the whole composition with unusual interweaving of word and thoughts; and thus it veils truth in a fair and fitting garment of fiction. (XIV.vii, p. 39)

Obscurity is a necessary veil for sacred knowledge; Boccaccio insists that the reader must search for allegorical meanings and not superficially view only the literal surface:

Wherefore I again grant that poets are at times obscure, but invariably explicable if approached by a sane mind; for these cavillers view them with owl eyes, not human. Surely no one can believe that poets invidiously veil the truth with fiction, either to deprive the reader of the hidden sense, or to appear the more clever; but rather to make truths which would otherwise cheapen by exposure the object of strong intellectual effort and various interpretation, that in ultimate discovery they shall be more precious. . . . You must read, you must persevere, you must sit up nights, you must inquire, and exert the utmost power of your mind. If one way does not lead to the desired meaning, take another; if obstacles arise, then still another; until, if your strength holds out, you will find that clear which at first looked dark. For we are forbidden by divine command to give that which is holy to dogs, or to cast pearls before swine. (XIV.xii, pp. 60, 62)

Boccaccio's theories, though they have deep roots both in medieval theory and practice, are central for Renaissance poetics. Similarly, the realism of the Decameron and of Hercules in De Casibus and De Claris Mulieribus are modern in their reaching beyond a figural context. But if Boccaccio's poetics and realism point toward the future, De Genealogia remains essentially a medieval encyclopaedia.
In *De Genealogia* the Hercules myth is presented in great detail, but these details are weighted down with allegorical interpretations uncritically gathered from sources both ancient and contemporary, together with further interpretations of Boccaccio's own. Though numerous classical authorities are cited, most of them are taken second-hand from Fulgentius, Boethius, Servius, Lactantius, Macrobius, Albricus, and other medievalists.

The Hercules myth as it appears in *De Genealogia* is thus for the most part a collection of derivative medieval material and allegorical interpretations gleaned from Boccaccio's predecessors. The basic plan of the *De Genealogia* is to record available material rather than to synthesize it; if conflicting theories arise Boccaccio's only solution is to assume that there were more than one Hercules, Jupiter, or Bacchus. Thus we have Hercules prima, the ninth son of Jove the first (II.ix, p. 80), Hercules the thirteenth son of Jove the second (V.xlvi, p. 282), Hercules the son of Nylus (VII.xxxii, p. 365), and Hercules the thirty-eighth son of Jove the third (XIII.i, pp. 632-43). The etymological derivation of the name Hercules interests Boccaccio, but he does not attempt to solve the conflicting theories of Leontius, Paulus Perusinus, Rabanus, and Varro (XIII.i, p. 638). Thirty-one labors are listed, but, as we expect from Boccaccio's emphasis on Hercules in his earlier treatises, "trigesimum primum laborem superasse non potuit; nam cum cetera superasset monstra,
amori muliebri succubuit" (XIII.1, p. 637). As for the authority of Ovid and Statius that Hercules fell to Omphale, not Iole, Boccaccio agreeably comments, "Sane possible est utrumque verum, cum multa fuerint Hercules, et sic variis apud varias mulieres varie potuit contigisse" (XIII.1, p. 637). Occasionally the author introduces his own interpretations of the labors, but the greater part of Boccaccio's material is available from other medieval sources. In short, Boccaccio's De Genealogia reflects both the author's medieval background and his humanist interests. All authorities are grouped together indiscriminately, for from a medieval figural outlook they all can be placed within the context of God's symbolic world.

The increasing interest in the classical legends, themselves, however, is a foreshadowing of the future Renaissance. Though the humanist impetus has not yet theoretically developed a critical historical distinction of "the classical world," humanistic realism and secular interests are breaking beyond figural boundaries in practice.

The De Genealogia was not a departure from medieval explicit allegorical interpretation, but was rather a significant compilation of all such interpretations and classical legends into a single easily accessible handbook. Boccaccio's encyclopaedia of myth soon became the standard reference work on mythology for the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries; its influence throughout the Renaissance is immense. What is even more important for
our purposes, however, is that the *De Genealogia* was owned and admired by Boccaccio's humanist friend Coluccio Salutati, the author of the massive *De Laboribus Herculis*.

Salutati's *De Laboribus Herculis*, also given the name *De Sensibus Allegoricis Fabularum Herculis*, was the last work of that great Florentine humanist and remained unfinished at his death in 1406. What had started in a letter to Giovanni of Siena as an extensive commentary on Seneca's *Hercules Furens*, sometime after 1378, was expanded after Giovanni's death in 1383 to four books dealing with the nature and defense of poetry, the allegorical interpretations of Hercules' birth, youth, and labors, and a discussion of the descents of Hercules and other heroes to the underworld. Salutati did not live to complete his work—we have little on Hercules' relations with women, his death, and his apotheosis—but the four books of 1405 remain the most thorough compilation of the Hercules legends and their allegorizations up to that time.

I shall not discuss in detail Salutati's treatise here—like the *De Genealogia* of Boccaccio, the *De Laboribus Herculis* is more an encyclopaedic gathering together of older accounts than an attempt at reinterpretation—but it is noteworthy to point out that the noted Chancellor Coluccio Salutati, considered with Petrarch and Boccaccio as one of the triumverate of fourteenth century Italian humanism, should spend much of his maturity in compiling accounts and interpretations of the life and labors of
Hercules. The contents of *De Laboribus Herculis* are by the end of the fourteenth century familiar to us: Salutati's defense of poetry in Book I is similar to Boccaccio's discussions in *De Genealogia*—poetry is divinely inspired, truth is revealed allegorically under the veil of fiction, the true poet leads his audience by way of a pleasing literal surface to underlying moral and analogical truths.Books II-IV include Hercules' Choice (III.vii.1-4, pp. 181-3), thirty-one labors, and etymological considerations of the name Hercules (II.xvi.6-7, p. 141; III.ii.2, pp. 168-9).

The differences between the Hercules of Salutati and the Hercules of the earlier Boccaccio and others exist only in degree, but they are indicative of future views toward the myth. Salutati, faced with the multiplicity of Hercules figures from his sources, does not attempt the genealogical stratagems of Boccaccio, but sees Hercules as symbolic of *virtus* itself, a figure whose physical conquests are to be interpreted in terms of moral allegory (III.i-v, pp. 164-77). This emphasis in *De Laboribus* on moral allegory rather than on euhemerism or figural typology inhibits much attention to the realistic details of the legends, which are submerged under a weight of allegorical interpretations. The inclusion of Hercules' Choice and the emphasis on the symbolic character of Hercules as a moral hero, however, point toward characteristic Renaissance interests in the myth. In *De Laboribus* Hercules is the active hero who
embodies nobility, wisdom, and moral perfection; his rational control over his passions, as indicated by his victorious labors, leads to the attainment of truth.

Hercules, like Aeneas and Orpheus, descends to the underworld for contemplation, only to return to the heroic endeavors of an active life; the contemplative ideal of Dante and the Middle Ages is here replaced by the active ideal of Renaissance man. Thus for Salutati the name Hercules represents a generic title that itself epitomizes the active aspirations of Renaissance man—it should be traced to *heres cleos*, he who achieved glory through struggle (II.xvi.6, p. 141).

In summation, Salutati stands, like his fellow humanists Petrarch and Boccaccio, beyond the medieval position of Dante but not yet completely within the world of the Renaissance. Petrarch reintroduced the motif of Hercules' Choice, Boccaccio focused upon Hercules in terms of satiric realism and allegorical correspondences, and Salutati viewed Hercules as an active and rational moral hero—all three Trecento humanists have moved beyond the medieval approach of figural euhemerism. But at the same time Herculean references appear for the most part still encumbered by allegorical glosses; whereas typological symbolism is increasingly overshadowed by secular realism and pagan motifs, the medieval allegorical tradition remains vigorously alive.

The seal of Florence and the works of Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Salutati, as we have seen, display the
Hercules myth vividly before the eyes of fourteenth century Florentine culture. The influence of these humanists spreads throughout Western Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, carrying classical learning and culture, and an awakened interest in pagan myth, to an apex of development in the High Renaissance. The myth of Hercules, as an implicit allegory of the active life of virtuous heroism, stands in a central position in this European reawakening.

Yet, concomitant with the Renaissance interest in the Hercules legends as implicit allegory, there are surviving euhemeristic and typological associations of the myth that were not challenged immediately by post-Dantean secular realism. The expansive realism of pagan myth in the Quattrocento, though it might appear secular in context, is still justified under the cloak of euhemeristic typology. The difference between the medieval and Renaissance view is that these Christian correspondences are seen as more implicitly inherent rather than as explicitly labeled. Both the medieval traditions of allegorical and of typological interpretation persist through the Renaissance, but these exegetical approaches are viewed as implicit in artistic structures that attempt not to distort classical harmony into Christian conventions but rather to reveal the essential religious quality of classical form. We have indicated in the works of these Trecento humanists how the medieval allegorical interpretations of Hercules are gathered
together and transmitted to the Renaissance world. Before we pass into the Quattrocento, however, we might bring together here the medieval euhemeristic tradition and show how it too carries Hercules into the forefront of the Renaissance.

2

We have already noted Hercules' appearance in typological context in the Middle Ages—the development from euhemerism to typology and the resultant distortion of pagan myth into Christian garb are readily apparent in medieval art and in Dante—but medieval euhemerism also provided other areas in which pagan myth could survive seemingly untouched by typological symbolism. The historicity of Hercules in the Middle Ages, that is, provided the raw material to which typological significance could be attributed; but such significance was not always explicitly evident in the historical context. Perhaps in the Christian Middle Ages such typological references were not always deemed necessary—in God's world these meanings would be self-evident—but the lack of explicit correspondences left the pagan Hercules portrayed as a historical hero in unabashed realistic terms. Hercules is kept alive in such realistic euhemeristic context in two main medieval guises: as a hero in the medieval Alexander and Troy legends, and as a figure in the universal histories.
The early Alexander legends do not contain extensive accounts of Hercules, but he is mentioned as a direct ancestor of Alexander, who named his supposed son Heracles and attempted to go beyond the Herculean limits of the known world. The verse King Alisaunde (c. 1300) mentions the Thebans' plea to Alexander to save their city, for Hercules "of kynne/gine" was born there; later in the poem Alexander finds in India two gold statues or columns place by Hercules to mark the limit of his former travels—Alexander, valiant descendant that he is, of course goes beyond them. The later extant alliterative fragment Alexander B (c. 1367) incorporates further material from the early Historia Alexandri Magni de Prelis (c. 950) concerning the life of the Brahmins in India: The Greeks, write the Brahmins to Alexander, have as many false gods as the body has limbs: they worship Hercules as the god of arms and pay homage to him with flowers and green branches. This latter reference does not appear euhemeristic, but by the middle of the fifteenth century in the alliterative Wars of Alexander Hercules has become in this context more a man than a deity: Hercules, glorified for the twelve "wondirfull werkis he wrozt with his handis," is worshipped as a great emperor of magnificent deeds.

The Herculean material in the medieval Alexander legends is peripheral, incorporated chiefly to associate Alexander with a heroic genealogical past, but the Troy romances provided a central repository for the euhemeristic accounts of
Hercules in the Middle Ages. Hercules, who brought about the first destruction of Troy after the voyage of the Argonauts, is presented as a historical figure throughout these romances, even though the accounts of his miraculous birth and his labors are taken chiefly from Ovid and other narratives that were allegorized by the medieval commentators.

The most extensive retelling of these Hercules legends appears in Book I of Lydgate's *Troy Book* (1412-20), but of course we can trace the medieval Troy romances as far back as Dares and Dictys in the sixth century. Hercules appears in Dares Phrygius' *De Excidio Trojae Historia*, in Benoît de Sainte-More's expansion of Dares in his French verse *Roman de Troie* (c. 1155-60), and in the later Latin prose version of Guido della Colonna, the *Historia Destructionis Troiae* (1287). From these basic sources were derived most of the fourteenth and fifteenth century retellings of the Troy legends in England; we thus see Hercules in the verse versions of the *Seige of Troye* (early fourteenth century), the alliterative *Gest Hystoriale of the Destruction of Troy* (late fourteenth century), the *Laud Troy Book* (c. 1400), Lydgate's *Troy Book* (1412-20), and in the later prose romance, *The Sege of Troye* (middle fifteenth century).

Lydgate's *Troy Book*, written at the beginning of the fifteenth century, can serve to illustrate the euhemeristic emphasis on Hercules in these medieval romances. Lydgate introduces Hercules with a brief account of his birth and of ten of his labors, ending with Hercules' acceptance of
Atlas' burden on his own shoulders; Ovid is explicitly
cited as a source for the labors, the Hercules and Atlas
association was widely allegorized by commentators on
Boethius' De Consolatione and other texts, but Lydgate
refuses to allegorize his account or to draw any explicit
typological correspondences. Lydgate then goes on to
narrate in full the voyage of the Argonauts after the Golden
Fleece, including Laomedon's refusal to allow the voyagers
to rest at Troy and the later return of Hercules with
numerous others to demolish Troy and capture Laomedon's
daughter Hesione. Here again Lydgate follows Ovid,
though he is doubtful of the plausibility of Medea's magical
powers, and here again Hercules is presented in realistic
euhemeristic context. Lydgate's fifteenth century
approach toward Hercules is more complex than we have in-
dicated here—there are both on one hand symbolic overtones
in his works and on the other hand a reaching beyond the
euhemeristic tradition as a whole, as we shall see later—
but in the Troy Book Hercules appears wholly within the
narrative context as a realistic figure devoid of explicit
symbolic or typological associations.

The euhemeristic approach to pagan myth apparent here
in the romance had its precedent in the euhemeristic in-
corporation of myths in medieval histories, universal in
scope. The providential view of history, in which God
controlled and shaped all history according to His Divine
judgment, led to the incorporation of Old Testament material
and then classical myths as foreshadowings of the Christian revelation; the historicity of such incorporated material, therefore, was to be insistently maintained throughout the Middle Ages as long as the figural view of history prevailed.

Perhaps the first appearances of Hercules in medieval historical treatises are in the *Chronicorum* of Eusebius, consisting of the *Chronographia*, which is an epitome of universal history, and the *Chronological Canons*, translated and carried on by Jerome to the year 375. Here Hercules is mentioned as a voyager with the Argonauts, as a long lived man who helped establish the Olympic games, and as the conqueror over both "Anthaeus" and "Anteum." Samson, who appears soon after Hercules' death, is described as "fortissimus omnium" and is said to have been compared with Hercules. The later work of St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* (413-26), parallels Biblical and pagan history, or the histories of the heavenly and the earthly city, and follows Eusebius by distinguishing two euhemeristic Hercules figures: One at the time of Moses, and one at the time of Joshua. The first Hercules would then be a compatriot with Mercury, the grandson of Atlas, but, as Augustine notes, "at whatever time they were born, it is agreed among grave historians, who have committed these ancient things to writing, that both were men, and that they merited divine honours from mortals because they conferred on them many benefits to make this life pleasant to them." Augustine's disciple Paulus Orosius, in his *Seven Books of History Against the*
Pagans (c. 416-8), added incidental references to Hercules' pillars at Gades, his battle with Theseus against the Amazons, and Alexander's attempt to outdo Hercules' exploits in India.

These early historical accounts provided available authority for later inclusion of classical myth in universal histories, though euhemeristic validity was not always recognized. In England King Alfred translated Orosius and spoke of Hercules specifically as a giant, but Matthew Paris in his later Chronica Majora (c. 1259), though he cited Augustine, attacked various myths as mere inventions of the populace. The Polychronicon (c. 1327) of Ranulph Higden brings us to the fourteenth century and a noticeable expansion of the earlier historical accounts of Hercules, with acknowledged indebtedness not only to Augustine but also to Ovid, Virgil, Boethius, and Dares.

Higden's extensive Polychronicon, translated into English by John Trevisa in 1387, presented the euhemeristic Hercules to fourteenth century England in much the same manner as Boccaccio's contemporary De Genealogia Deorum had made available the allegorical interpretations of the myth, also given in a historical or genealogical framework. Drawing from Augustine, Eusebius, and others, Higden distinguishes two historical Hercules figures: The victor over Antaeus and Busiris in the time of Moses, and the great hero of the twelve labors in the time of Ayoth or Ehud. This later Hercules, however, though Higden discusses his
travels, deeds, and death in full, is accepted with reservations. Faced with multiple and contradictory sources, the author is cautiously skeptical: Of the labors, the conquests of the Nemean lion and the Arcadian bear appear historical, the incidents with the harpies and the apples of the Hesperides are allegorical fables, and all the other labors mingle history and fable together. Moreover, Higden notes, authorities disagree as to the number of men considered to be Hercules. Augustine notes that Samson was accounted a Hercules for his strength, Dares refers to Jason as Hercules, and Ovid attributes various of Hercules' labors to others. Higden's final comment, in Trevisa's translation, reminds us of similar statements by Boccaccio and Salutati:

\[\text{Furthermore wise men tell us that Hercules is the surname of noble men and stalworse, that passed other men hugely in boldness and in strength. And so it seems all by kyndeliche menyng of that name; for Hercules is in seide of heroes, that is a man, and of cleos, that is bliss; as they Hercules were to menyng a blisful man and glorious.}\]

Despite Higden's skepticism the presence of Hercules as a historical personage continued to appear in the universal histories of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The Eulogium Historiarum (c. 1366) follows the account of Hercules' deeds in the Polychronicon; John Capgrave's mid-fifteenth century Chronicle of England also places Hercules and his twelve labors in the time of Ehud, after the death of Joshua. The Chronicle (c. 1464) of John Hardyng, later continued by Richard Grafton to 1543, mentions
the first destruction of Troy and the death of Laomedon by Hercules in the genealogy traced from Adam to Brutus. Indeed, when the historical accounts of Hercules in the medieval romance, especially in the Troy legends of Lydgate, are seen in chronological context here, the late Middle Ages appears as a time of flourishing interest in euhemerized myth.

The medieval foundation supporting this euhemeristic and typological edifice, however, had already begun to deteriorate. The fifteenth century marked by a culminating interest in euhemerism is also the century in which a critical humanistic historiography emerges in the Florentine history of Leonardo Bruni and in the later works of Biondo and Piccolomini. Histories on the medieval pattern—an alistic, providential, universal in scope—begin to be replaced by histories motivated by contemporary national interests and secular utilitarianism. As a result, the incorporation of classical mythology within a historical framework becomes determined more by nationalistic than by theocentric justifications, and only those myths relating to the founding of dynasties and the advancement of national pride are explored in full. Yet even these explorations are tempered by the critical awareness of multiple sources for such myths: The humanist approach to history paradoxically leads both to an expansion of selected classical myths and also to a skeptical disavowal of their complete historical veracity. The medieval typological tradition continues
to linger on as an implicit foundation for realistic
euhemerism—we shall note this implicit substructure in
the works of the Christian poets Ronsard and Spenser—but
for the most part Renaissance euhemerism is more closely
connected with didactic and patriotic purposes. When
critical historiography has effectively challenged the
historicity of myth, the world of classical mythology be-
comes an unreal realm of fancy and fable that cannot
ultimately withstand the carping attacks of seventeenth
century rationalism.

3

To conclude our view of the fourteenth century interest
in Hercules, and to suggest in what directions later
approaches to the myth would proceed, we turn here to
Geoffrey Chaucer, whose work epitomizes the perplexing
and at times ambiguous art of the late Middle Ages, at once
both beyond Dante's figural context and yet within the
traditional framework of allegorical interpretation.
Chaucer's Herculean material also serves to point out what
were the basic fourteenth century interpretative contexts of
the myth, as have been pointed out: The euhemeristic approach
evident in the romances and the universal histories; the
satiric context seen in the works of Boccaccio; and the
allegorical tradition as transmitted by the mythographical
compilations of Boccaccio and Salutati.
The familiar euhemeristic Hercules of the romances appears in Chaucer's Legend of Hypsipyle in The Legend of Good Women (ll. 1454, 1480-546). Here Hercules acts as an ally and go-between for Jason in his wooing and marriage of Queen Hypsipyle of Lemnos. The presentation of Hercules resembles what we have noted in the euhemeristic romances: Main attention is on the literal narrative, with little allegorical commentary on the hero or on his actions; the only indication of explicit allegorical significance is in the brief allusion to Hercules as "the stronge E-rcules." Nor can this euhemeristic emphasis be attributed alone to Chaucer's sources; as Professor Robinson has pointed out, Chaucer intentionally expands Hercules' role in the action as a compatriot of Jason in the affairs of love.

The adventures of Hercules and Jason as leaders of the Argonauts had appeared in the Troy romances, and in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde we find another interesting reference to Hercules that would indicate the author's awareness of the euhemeristic context of the myth. At the beginning of Book IV the time of year is late summer, "whan that Phebus shynyng is / Upon the brest of Hercules lyoun" (ll. 31-2). Chaucer is of course referring to the Nemean lion seen here as Leo, one of the signs of the zodiac, but in the context of the poem this reference to Hercules, the national Greek hero, is more than a passing allusion. These introductory lines in Book IV set the stage for Hector's victorious day on the battlefield and the
capture of Antenor and others by the Greeks. The Herculean
day presages the Greeks' Herculean victory. Moreover, the
capture of Antenor on this day leads to Calchas' plea for
a prisoner exchange, Antenor for Cressida. Calchas' appeal,
by referring to his prophetic link with Phoebus Apollo
as the sun god and by associating the Greek victory im-
plicitly with Hercules' first destruction of Troy, dramati-
cally recalls the introductory Herculean setting of the action:

Apollo hath me told it feithfully;
I have ek found it be astronomye,
By sort, and by augurye ek, trewely,
And dar wel say, the tyme is faste by
That fire and flaumbe on al the town shall sprede,
And thus shall Troie torne to asshen deede.

For certein, Phewus and Neptunus bothe,
That makeden the walles of the town,
Ben with the folk of Troie alwey so wrothe,
That they wol brynge it to confusioun,
Right in despit of kyng Lameadoun.
Bycause he nolde payen hem here hire,
The town of Troie shall ben set on-fire.
(11. 113-26)

Laomedon's refusal to pay Neptune for building the walls of
Troy had led to the scourges of the sea monster and the pro-
posed sacrifice of Hesione, who was rescued by Hercules;
Laomedon's refusal to reward Hercules had then led to the
eventual destruction of Troy. Chaucer here subtly utilizes
both the astronomical and euhemeristic contexts of the
Hercules myth to suggest here the eventual victory of the
Greek forces over the Trojans. In fact the Herculean
victory at the beginning of Book IV foreshadows not only
the national conquest over the Trojans but also the fall
of fortune for the Trojan lover Troilus at the loss of
Cressida; Calchas' prophecy of doom for Troy is more true
than he knows.

Hercules' labors are also euhemerized by Chaucer in his
translation of Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae* and
in *The Monk's Tale*, which is indebted to Boethius and to the
Boethian commentaries. Boethius' sixth century *De Con-
solatione Philosophiae* had mentioned Hercules' life and
labors as a prominent example of man's heroic struggle to
attain virtue. The brief account included twelve labors, of
which the last was the acceptance of Atlas' burden of the
heavens upon Hercules' own shoulders. For his final feat
Hercules had merited a place in heaven, and the account
ended:

\[
\text{Ite nunc fortes ubi celsa magni}
\text{Ducit exempli nia! Cur inertes}
\text{Terga nudatis? Superata tellus 61}
\text{Sidera donat. (IV. m. vii. 32-5).}
\]

Later medieval commentators and translators of Boethius ex-
panded this and other Herculean references with euhemeristic
glosses. King Alfred's ninth century translation of the
*De Consolatione*, though omitting Hercules' specific labors
noted above, enlarged the ending of the account into a
lengthy plea for wise men to follow the example of those
who "wunnon aeft weordscipe on /isse worulde." The other
two references to Hercules in the original, one a brief mention
of Hercules' conquest of Busiris (II,—p. vi, 34-5; Loeb, p.
and the other an allusion to the Hydra (IV, p. vi, 7-10; Loeb, p. 338), were similarly expanded by Alfred in euhemeristic terms. A late ninth century commentary on Boethius' *De Consolatione*, presumably written by the Irishman Johannes Scottus, followed the same pattern as Alfred's contemporary work, with euhemeristic discussions of the Busiris and Hydra allusions and the omission of Hercules' labors in favor of general comments on man's need to imitate brave heroes and lovers of virtue. Scottus also included a discussion of the Hercules-Achelous battle, in order to interpret the words *copia cornu*, and an etymological interpretation of the name Alcides that associated him with beauty and bravery.

By Chaucer's time in the late fourteenth century the commentaries on Boethius' popular treatise had spread throughout Europe. Chaucer for his *Boece* referred to the current Latin commentary of Nicholas Trivet and a French prose version ascribed to Jean de Meun, but he also utilized the Latin original. The Busiris and Hydra allusions are close translations of the original, the original discussion of Hercules' twelve labors is included, and yet the latter account remains heavily glossed. The glosses that Chaucer includes here are for the most part simple elaborations of euhemeristic detail to explain the respective labors, but in the glosses for the end passage there is the traditional awareness of the exemplaristic or symbolic moral overtones of the myth, so that Hercules'
labors become synonymous with the struggle of virtue against vice:

Goth now thanne, ye stronge men, ther as the heye wey of the greet ensaunple ledith yow. O nyce men! why make ye your bakkes? (As who seith, "O ye sowe and delicat men! whi flee ye aduersites, and ne fyghte nat ayeins hem by vertu, to wynnen the mede of the hevens?) For the erthe overcomen yeveth the sterres. (This is to seyn, that whan that earthly lust is overcomyn, a man is makid worthy to the hevane.) (IV, m. vii, 63-72).

Here Chaucer's euhemeristic emphasis blends into a general allegorical commentary on Hercules as a symbol of virtuous heroism. Chaucer's approach to Boethius was anticipated by earlier commentators and reflects the meaning inherent in Boethius' text, but it also is indicative of Chaucer's approach to the Hercules myth: Aware of euhemerism and presenting Hercules for the most part in these terms, Chaucer is also led to explicit allegorical glosses that tend to glorify Hercules beyond his historical stature.

Allegorical correspondences do not figure prominently in Chaucer, but they are suggested in the portrayal of Hercules' virtues. Hercules, who we find associated with fame in The House of Fame (III.1410-4), is usually praised in Chaucer's works for his strength: In The Book of the Duchess (l. 1058) Hercules appears as a figure of the greatest physical strength, though this virtue is seen as inadequate against the powers of Venus in The Knight's Tale (l. 1943). Chaucer is aware of the satiric emphasis espoused by Boccaccio in De Casibus Virorum and De Claris
Mulieribus, and we find Hercules humbled in the tapestry of the Temple of Venus not only in The Knight's Tale but also in The Parliament of Fowls (l. 288), yet for the most part Hercules remains a heroic figure of virtue. Women are to blame. Thus in the Prologue to The Wife of Bath's Tale (ll. 724-5) the Wife recalls that her husband Jankyn read to her of Hercules' deceitful wife Deianeira, who "caused hym to sette hymself a fyre." 67

In the Monk's Tale Chaucer's approach to the myth is perhaps most characteristically displayed. After brief mention of Hercules' labors (VII.2095-110), taken from Boethius and perhaps from Ovid's Heroides, and a stanza in praise of Hercules' strength and wordly fame, Chaucer introduces Deianeira and the poisoned shirt for a grisly description of the hero's death. Though aware of the Boccaccian satiric emphasis, Hercules' infidelity is not stressed as a sufficient cause for his fall. He remains a vigorous and noble hero, and his inglorious death agonies, scenes usually more closely associated with the Boccaccian tradition, are introduced only to point more clearly to the fickleness of Fortune, which can overthrow even the most stalwart of heroes:

Thus starf this worthy, myghty Hercules.
So, who can truste on Fortune any throwe?
For hym that folweth al this world of prees,
Er he be war, is ofte yleyd ful lowe.
Ful wys is he that kan hymselfen knowe!
Beth war, for whan that Fortune list to glose,
Thanne wayteth she her man to overthrowe
By swich a way as he wolde leest suppose.
(VII.2135-42)

In this account in The Monk's Tale we can see Chaucer's awareness of the paradoxical nature of the Hercules figure as it appeared to fourteenth century eyes. On one hand Hercules was a personage of the universal histories and medieval romances whose life was a realistic panorama of glorious action; on the other hand Hercules and his deeds were rich veins for allegorical and typological interpretations. Chaucer, in The Monk's Tale, effectively harmonizes these contrapuntal approaches by interweaving euhemeristic realism and allegorical commentary so that they become inseparable; the focus is then directed to an omniscient commentary on Fortune, thereby leaving Hercules before the reader as a realistic historical figure in a struggle that transcends his particularity—Hercules is given the scope of the tragic hero.

The Monk's Tale, as we all know, is introduced by Chaucer as "Heere bigynneth the Monkes Tale De Casibus Virorum Illustrium;" there is no doubt that Chaucer was influenced by the Italy of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. But how far was Chaucer influenced by the allegorical tendencies of his time? Early critics have searched diligently for verbal parallels to the Ovide Moralisé, Boccaccio's De Genealogia, and more recently to the Libellus de Decrum Imaginibus, but Chaucer's artistic utilization of
allegorized myth has not yet been thoroughly investigated. Douglas Bush has stated bluntly that "in connection with Chaucer's rationalistic attitude it may be noted that his armor of common sense leaves him almost untouched by the allegorical mania," but some recent scholars are not so sure. Chaucer's Hercules references are hardly substantial enough for a touchstone in this question, but they do indicate a tentative answer that reflects the general fourteenth-century attitudes toward myth. Chaucer is primarily euhemeristic in his approach, and yet the glosses on Boethius and the commentary on Hercules in The Monk's Tale suggest Chaucer's awareness of the symbolic connotations underlying his realistic portrayal of the hero.

The question of Chaucer's realism as opposed to his exemplaristic intentions, be they implicit or explicit, has not yet been clarified, and perhaps it must remain somewhat inconclusive. Certainly Chaucer's views of Hercules cannot be wholly reconciled between the Charybdis of euhemerism and the Scylla of allegory. For Chaucer, like the other figures of the fourteenth century that we have noted--Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Salutati--stands boths rooted in the Middle Ages and extended toward the Renaissance. Whereas these artists and humanists remain traditionally medieval in their religious and symbolic orientation, they have in their interest in secular realism and in pagan myth overreached the world of Dante. They foreshadow the Renaissance of the Quattrocento, though they are not yet there.
NOTES

1 Seznec, pp. 19-20.


5 Mommsen, p. 179; Panofsky, Hercules am Scheideweg, pp. 155-6.

6 Panofsky, Ibid., pp. 59-64, discusses the theme of the Judgment of Paris in medieval literature and art; Mommsen, pp. 183-8, and Panofsky, Ibid., pp. 64-8, discuss the use of the Pythagorean Y by classical and Christian writers, including Isidore in his Etymologiae (I.iii.7). Numerous other studies of the Pythagorean Y are noted by Mommsen, p. 184, n. 1.

7 Cited in Mommsen, pp. 182-3, from the English translation of J. Zeitlin, Petrarch's Life of Solitude (Urbana, Illinois, 1924), p. 286--. The Latin text is also in Mommsen, p. 183, n. 1, from Petrarch's Opera (Basle, 1581), p. 283.

8 Mommsen, pp. 189-92, explores Petrarch's other writings on virtus and glory and, like Panofsky, p. 165, n. 4, notes Petrarch's ambivalent position between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. On Petrarch and the active ideal, see Eugene F. Rice, Jr., The Renaissance Idea of

9 Roberto Weiss, The Dawn of Humanism in Italy (London, 1947), points out that humanist interests can be seen in such Italian figures as Mussato, Lovato, Ferrato, and Gero D'Arezzo, all long before Petrarch; a helpful bibliography is provided on pp. 22-3. B.L. Ullman, Studies in the Italian Renaissance, pp. 27-40, has noted several thirteenth century French humanist predecessors.

10 I note here a Dante sonnet, Il Canzoniere, No. 42, ed. P. Fraticelli, Opera Minori de Dante Alighieri, I (1911), 215-6, as translated by Richard Garnett, Dante, Petrarch, Camoens: CXXIV Sonnets (London, 1896), p. 24: "Two ladies on the summit of my mind / Have met together, speech of Love to hold." The poet does not choose between Beauty and Virtue, but characteristically bows down and lets Love, as "fountain of all wit," decide. Simon, Hercule et le Christianisme, p. 119, n. 4, and Toynbee, p. 470, cite early associations of the choice of Hercules with Christ's temptations in the wilderness and on a high mountain. These citations are scarce, as Edgar Wind (Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance (London, 1958), p. 168, n. 1) has noted, but the Choice of Hercules was not a medieval motif.

11 See Mommsen, p. 178, for pertinent references. Mommsen, pp. 190-1, notes that the biographies to be presented in De Viris Illustribus were to be of those illustrious men whose fame was "the gift of virtus and gloria, not that of fortuna."

12 Seznec, pp. 173-4, 176. The recent article by Ernest H. Wilkins, "Descriptions of Pagan Divinities from Petrarch to Chaucer," Speculum, XXXII (1957), 511-22, covers the same ground as did Seznec seventeen years before, though Wilkins omits any reference to Seznec's findings. The conclusion of Wilkins that Chaucer in the depiction of Venus in the House of Fame (ll. 131-9) and the Knight's Tale (ll. 1555-66) used the later Libellus has been adequately challenged by Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences, pp. 79-80, n. 2.

13 Seznec, pp. 176-9, indicates how the Libellus could serve as a literary source for art illustrations of the pagan divinities and thereby lead to hybrid and distorted classical themes or subjects. Not until the Italian Quattrocento were classical theme and classical image to be reintegrated completely and to be seen as parts of a detached,


16 See Wright, pp. 115-6, on the attacks versus the Decameron.

17 Here we can refer to the authorities cited by R.H. Green in *CL*, IX (1957), 126-8 and notes 14-21. Obviously these later humanists would appeal to the example of Dante for their concern with secular and "poetic" interests. But whereas Dante's realism was distinctly medieval in context and interpretation, though Dante himself acknowledged his affinity with the "allegory of poets" in the *Convivio*, the realism of Boccaccio and the praise of human achievement by Petrarch points toward the Renaissance world of secular realism.

18 See the important articles by R.H. Green, "Alan of Lille's De planctu Naturae," *Speculum*, XXXI (1956), 649-74, and D.W. Robertson, Jr., "Some Medieval Literary Terminology," *SP*, XLVIII (1951), 669-92, on the medieval background of this view of poetry. (See also the thorough discussions of Curtius, pp. 203-6, 214-27, 443-5).

19 The standard text of Henry Bergen, ed. Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, EETS ES 121-124 (London, 1924-7), includes the relevant extracts from Boccaccio and De Premiersfayt in vol. IV. The following references will be to this text. For Boccaccio's *Life of Hercules*, see IV, 158; for De Premiersfayt's, IV, 156-8.

20 Bergen edition, IV, 162-3 (in extensive chapter on the Malice of Women), 400 (the excuse of Messalina to
Caligula and Tiberius). The only other reference of Boccaccio's that I could find, p. 140, is typically medieval in tone: God does not ask each of us to undertake the labors of Hercules but only to love Him with good deeds and humble faith.


23 On the French version, see Tuve, "Spenser's Reading: The De Claris Mulieribus." pp. 149–60. The Lord Morley text has been edited by H.G. Wright, EETS OS 214 (London, 1943); this edition includes the Latin text of Egidius van der Heerstraten (Louvain, 1487), Morley's probable source.


25 See Tuve, Ibid., pp. 156–7. Miss Tuve's argument that Spenser unifies separate images of Hercules' hands and of his club found only in the French text is perhaps not enough evidence upon which to assume that Spenser therefore used this particular edition. Many sources of the Hercules myth were available for Spenser. Parallels to the Iole account in Spenser are seen also in De Premierfait's translation of De Casibus (Bergen edition, IV, 165–8), and Miss Tuve states herself, pp. 162–5, that Spenser may have used the French De Casibus in other instances. The Wright edition of De Claris Mulieribus, p. lxix, notes that the French text of 1538 is a translation done with characteristic Renaissance freedom.


29 See for example the Alcestis story, XIII.1, p. 642. Boccaccio's interpretative methods are characteristically medieval and are close to Dante's in the *Convivio*. Osgood, *Boccaccio on Poetry*, pp. xviii-xxix, discusses Boccaccio's methods thoroughly, though I would question whether Boccaccio is as critical as Osgood (see espec. p. xxvii) suggests.


31 E.H. Wilkins, *The University of Chicago MS. of the Genealogia Deorum Gentilium of Boccaccio* (Chicago, 1927), pp. 72-5 and plates II-III. Salutati viewed the *De Genealogia* not only as an important manual but also as the work of a poet; see Coluccii Salutati, *De Laboribus Herculis*, ed. B.S. Ullman (Zurich, 1951), III.xii.6, p. 220. All references to Salutati's *De Laboribus* are to this edition. Others apparently also accepted Boccaccio's work as a poetic text; see R. Oliver, rev. of B.S. Ullman's *Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, *Speculum*, XXXIII (1958), 150-3.


33 Ullman in his edition of the *De Laboribus*, pp. vii-xiv, traces the history of Salutati's work in detail.

34 Salutati, *De Laboribus Herculis*, Book I, pp. 3-72, and II.i.ii, pp. 82-7. See also Salutati's letters, ed. Novati, III, 223-31, 452-6, 494; IV, 176-204, 230-40. Novati's editorial notes have been corrected by the valuable


37 Danilo L. Aguzzi, "Allegory in the Heroic Poetry of the Renaissance," (diss. Columbia 1959), pp. 90-103, discusses Salutati's Hercules in reference to contemporary Italian humanistic interest in the virtuous moral hero, a hero whose perfection is attained in a political society and through active civic responsibility.


40 Kyng Alisaunder, ed. G.V. Smithers, *EETS* OS 227 (London, 1952), II. 2842-6, 5574-86. The source for this romance, the *Roman de Toute Chevalerie* (c. 1280) of Thomas of Kent, has not yet been edited out of MS., though the table of contents and brief extracts are available in Paul Meyer, *Alexander le Grand dans la Littérature Française du Moyen Age* (Paris, 1886), I, pp. 177-235; see especially heading for Chap. cxxviii, p. 185. Seneca, "De Beneficiis, I.xiii, VII.iii.1, Moral Essays, trans. J.W. Basore (Loeb Classics, 1928-35), III, 41-3, 463, cites Alexander's vanity and proud claim to Herculean prowess.
41 The Gests of King Alexander, ed. Francis P. Magoun (Cambridge, Mass., 1929), Alexander B, II. 669-74, 728-9. For the earlier text, see Der Alexanderroman des Archipresbyters Lec, ed. Friedrich Pfister (Heidelberg, 1913), I.xlv, p. 72 (Alexander and Apollo’s oracle before Thebes); III.xxvii.2, p. 125 (Hercules’ pillars); III.xi-xvi, p. 107 (Erahmins). The first two passages are translated by Margaret Schlauch, Medieval Narrative (New York, 1928), pp. 308 and 327.


43 Dictys Cretensis et Dares Phrygius, De Bello et Excidio Troiae, ed. Anne Dacier (Amstelaedami, 1702), Dares, Chap. iii, pp. 149-50; Benoît de Sainte-Maure, Le Roman de Troie, ed. Léopold Constans, Société des Anciens Textes Français, I (Paris, 1904), II.805-12, 971-1980, 2099-824; Guido de Columnis, Historia Destructionis Troiae, ed. Nathaniel E. Griffin (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), Books I (pp. 9-10), II-III (pp. 11-32), III-IV (pp. 33-43).


45 Lydgate’s Troy Book, ed. Henry Bergen, EETS ES 97 (London, 1906), Book I, II. 553-9 (Hercules’ birth and labors), 567-70 (Ovid cited); see I. 596 for explicit reference to Hercules as a historical personage.

46 Ibid., Book I, II. 645-3695 (Voyage of Argonauts), 3797-4419 (first destruction of Troy).

47 Ibid., Book I, II. 1707-800 (Medea account questioned).


49 Ibid., Eusebius-Hieronymus, p. 55 (841).


54 *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden*, ed. Churchill Babington, Rolls Series 41, II (1869), II.xiii, xiv (pp. 320, 336) and II.xvi, xvii, xx (pp. 348, 352-62, 388-94). The Trevisa translation is presented on adjacent pages.

55 Ibid., II.xvii, p. 363.


59 In the Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women*, F version, 11. 515-6, Hercules is mentioned as the rescuer of Alcestis from hell. This reference, though it could easily be interpreted allegorically as in Salutati *De Laboribus*, also remains unglossed in the euhemeristic narrative.

60 Robinson edition, p. 850. Chaucer may have been thinking of Hercules' traditional role in the romances as messenger and ally of Jason in his later affair with Medea, an analogue that Robinson does not mention in his notes.


63 Alfred, *Ibid.*, pp. 36.28-37.5 and p. 127.7-17; Sedgefield translation, pp. 37, 148. On Alfred's euhemerism, see R.J. Menner, *Speculum*, III (1928), 247. Alfred may have acquired his information on Busiris when he translated Orosius' *History*, where Hercules is spoken of as an euhemeristic giant; see King Alfred's Orosius, pp. 40. 21-3; 46.29-36; 132.10-5; 134.3.


65 *Ibid.*, pp. 71.3-12, 144.9-20.

67 In *The House of Fame*, I.402-4, Hercules, among other worthies, is mentioned as one who left his wife for another, but Chaucer here exonerates Aeneas from his desertion of Dido (see 11. 427-32) and later includes Hercules in the House of Fame.


69 R.W. Babcock, "The Medieval Setting of the Monk's Tale," *PMLA*, XLVI (1931), 205-13, has pointed out that Chaucer did not actually follow Boccaccio for the most part in *The Monk's Tale* but was closer to the conception of Fortuna developed in the non-clerical tradition of the *Roman de la Rose*, *Carmina Burana*, etc. See also Robinson edition, pp. 746-7.

For a convenient introduction to the general subject of Italian influence on Chaucer with an annotated bibliography, see Mario Praz, "Chaucer and the Great Italian Writers of the Trecento," *The Flaming Heart* (New York: Anchor, 1958), pp. 29-89.


For corroborating evidence of Chaucer's awareness of medieval symbolism, see Przemyslaw Mroczkowski, "Medieval Art and Aesthetics in *The Canterbury Tales*," *Speculum*,
XXXIII (1958), 204-21. Besides the available Ovidian allegorizations and Boccaccio, Chaucer may have specifically known the allegorical commentary of the English Franciscan John Ridewall, Fulgentius Metaforalis (c. 1330). For a brief discussion of Ridewall, see Seznec, pp. 94-5. Seznec's text, p. 94, l. 7, should read "the middle of the fourteenth century...".
CHAPTER III

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

1

In our discussion of the fourteenth century figures Petrarch, Boccaccio, Salutati, and Chaucer we have noted the survival of two main streams of pagan myth interpretation: the traditions of euhemerism and of exemplaristic allegory. Medieval euhemerism, having incorporated the pagan Hercules into the universal histories, established a context within which Hercules could be viewed as a typological precursor of Samson or ultimately of Christ; emphasis on the historicity of the myth, however, eventually encouraged the realistic display of the hero to such an extent that, after the time of Dante, the typological associations seemed overshadowed by the naturalistic intensity of the literal presentation. In Chaucer's Monk's Tale Hercules is sketched in vivid realistic colouring and the typological correspondences appear remote indeed. Nevertheless, together with the increased concern for realistic detail the writers of the fourteenth century continued to call upon explicit allegorical interpretations, often more moral than theological in tone. Though realistic presentations of Hercules were more prevalent in the historical romance, the mythological handbooks of Boccaccio and Salutati and the Ovidian commentaries remained per-
vasively influential. Hercules could thus be seen either as a realistic hero or as a figure symbolic of virtue, and these two areas remained distinct enough so that extensive allegorical interpretations of Boccaccio's or Chaucer's realism are often frustratingly inconclusive.

A similar separation between naturalistic realism and allegorical meaning is evident in the fifteenth century, especially in the Northern countries. The fifteenth century in France and the Netherlands appears as a period of extremes: On one hand there are stark depictions of secular domestic life; on the other hand allegories insist, as if in defense of a crumbling medieval symbolic framework, that all is vanitas and that only allegorical correspondences are valid in God's world. Yet in England, though the fifteenth century is marked by a similar cleavage between the euhemeristic romance and the morality play, as C.S. Lewis notes the disparity between these allegorical-realism extremes begins to dissolve in Lydgate and others': Homiletic allegory and courtly or erotic allegory begin to interfuse, together with added elements from the romances.

The gradual interplay of secular realism and allegorical meaning in Lydgate, also adumbrated in Boccaccio and Chaucer, can serve as a significant cue for the flourishing entrance of realistic pagan myth upon the stage of the Quattrocento. For if the late Middle Ages is characterized by a separation between realistic image and conceptual meaning, the High Renaissance of the Quattrocento is noticeably marked by the
interpenetration of image and concept in harmonious works of art and literature, simultaneously both vivid and real and implicitly symbolic.

The movement toward this Renaissance synthesis is evident not only in Boccaccio and Chaucer, whose portrayals of the lustful and dying Hercules are vivid and implicitly exemplaristic, but also in the gradual late medieval intermingling of the main euhemeristic and allegorical traditions of myth interpretation. For once the euhemeristic Hercules could be recognized as a typological figura his allegorical stature could be readily accepted. The figural view of Hercules saw him as a historical personage who, though ultimately subordinate to the heroic Christ, was a noble and glorious champion; the allegorical view saw Hercules as the symbolic embodiment of virtue, courage, and strength. Both of these traditions, though distinct in origin, came to mutually nourish each other in the late Middle Ages; their convergence upon the Hercules myth raised him to archetypal significance for the Renaissance in all three of its major locales: Italy, France, and England.

Concurrent with the Renaissance interest in the naturalistic Hercules as an implicitly symbolic figure, however, there appeared increasing humanist interest in critical historiography, motivated by patriotic and political aims. The shift from universal histories to critical national histories in the Quattrocento has already been touched upon briefly; the implications for the figure of Hercules, whose
historical career had been debated even by the ancients them-
selves, were profound. For, once Hercules' historical
reality had been questioned, the typological associations
of the myth, which seemed already tenuous under the impact
of post-Dantean realism, were explicitly discredited. No
longer could Hercules be seen as a historical figure of
Samson or of Christ. Moreover, the allegorical correspon-
dences of the myth were then eventually undermined: If the
myth of Hercules was indeed an unreal fable, its symbolic
relevance seemed hardly so intrinsically valid. Thus the
appearances of Hercules in post-Renaissance literature tend
to become increasingly superficial or decorative; the symbolic
power of the myth is still evident in satiric context, but
the noble Renaissance hero has become only a seventeenth cen-
tury buffoon.

The Renaissance approaches to Hercules that I have
sketched here may serve to illuminate more clearly some distin-
guishing aspects of the Renaissance and its views toward
classical mythology as a whole. First, the Renaissance can be
characterized as an era increasingly concerned with secular,
naturalistic realism: Within this broad context can be placed
the literary emphasis on sensual detail, the reintegration
in the fine arts of classical subject matter and classical
representation or motif, and the attempts of the Renaissance
artist in his method of realistic particularity to be in-
cclusive of a world of dynamic, ever mutable experience.
Secondly, however, the Renaissance must also be recognized
as an era supported by a foundation of implicit symbolism. The Renaissance world of naturalistic action and heroic achievement, that is, presents a real image of implicit symbolic correspondences, a microcosmic vision of the universe that is neither abstract nor reductive but rather retains its essential realistic delineations without denying its symbolic significance. Image and concept are fused in symbolic form that, through its harmonies, reveals its essential or archetypal character. This symbolic form is illustrated most clearly in the syncretism of the Quattrocento Neo-Platonists, where pagan myths can be interpreted simultaneously in both typological and moral allegorical terms, and would underlie the sensuous realism mentioned above: Specific sensual detail must be selected, in terms of decorum, to indicate symbolic relevance; classical subject matter and motif are integrated because of the underlying harmonious archetypal significance of the classical image; and the Renaissance artist is seen as a creator and revealer, from his relativistic point of view, of God's divine mysteries and wisdom. Thirdly, Renaissance humanism brings about a critical historical awareness and a break from the figural "omnitemporalness" of all human action, past, present, and future: There is a renewed interest in the classics as monuments of a completed and distant past, a more critical and scholarly approach towards classical myth in its original form, and a concern for linear perspective and classical imitation in art and literature. Finally; any interpretation
of the Renaissance, as it appears in the sixteenth century, must take into account the lasting effects of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation: Under this aegis the satiric attacks of the Patriarchs against pagan myth flourish again in the late sixteenth and seventeenth century climate of Puritan England.

These categorical statements on the nature of the Renaissance and its views toward classical mythology are, of course, fraught with hidden snares. I cannot be presumptuous enough to tackle thoroughly in this study a topic and a range of implications that have challenged the best efforts of such scholars as Burckhardt, Baron, Panofsky, and Kristeller. The Renaissance, many Renaissance scholars now admit, must be seen more as an era of transitory flux between the Middle Ages and the modern world than as a separate period itself; medieval traditions persist while modern doctrines of progress and empirical investigation gather impetus and point toward the world of the Royal Society and John Locke. Beyond this area of general agreement, however, the relative importance of the surviving medieval world order and theocentric traditions as opposed to the rising interest in secular empirical science and progress are focii for the most stimulating though often fruitless debates. Without denying either of these extremes, I would hope in this study to suggest tentatively, as my evidence indicates, that whereas the Renaissance is a period of transition it has yet its own distinctive though often complex and indeed confusing features. The
Renaissance stands between the monolithic categories "medieval" and "modern," but in its own peculiar transitory way it absorbs both the medieval tradition and modern spirit in a fragile, "classical," harmonious balance. Medieval traditions, such as allegorization and a religiously oriented world view, persist, but their persistence is transformed under "modern" conditions of literal clarity and secularism. In moving from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance I have of necessity emphasized the modern aspects that continue to arise within and beyond medieval traditions and perspective; such an emphasis, however, does not deny the pervasive existence of the medieval traditions that are called upon by poets and thinkers up until the end of the seventeenth century.

Florence, under whose roofs dwelt the imposing Trecento figures of Boccaccio and Salutati, was also the nurturer of the Florentine Platonic Academy in the last quarter of the Quattrocento. And, as Boccaccio and Salutati had transmitted the allegorical interpretations of the Hercules myth to the Renaissance world, so did Ficino and his followers popularize the Neo-Platonic view of Hercules as the Divine Hero and thus pass the myth on to sixteenth-century France and England. The allegorical Herculean interpretations propounded by Boccaccio and Salutati had for the most part been tropological, but the Hercules of the Neo-Platonists was a
curious hybrid symbolic figure more closely typological in character. The syncretic fusion of interpretative traditions in the Renaissance Hercules is clearly evident in these Platonic writings, but to an alarming degree: The pagan Hercules myth has been raised to a commensurate level with the Christian revelation.

The attempts of the chief Florentine Neo-Platonists, Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, to reconcile Platonism and other esoteric writings with Christianity led in fact not to medieval typology but rather to a syncretic equation in which the theology secretly concealed in the Orphic hymns or Hermetic writings was viewed as equivalent to Scriptural revelation. In this syncretic context the fables of the poets were also a source for allegorical truths; the Neo-Platonists interpreted various classical myths in Platonic-Christian terms and saw mythology as a source for philosophical knowledge. Their interpretations of Hercules, unusual as they might appear, were to be widely influential in later Renaissance literature and art.

Though the Choice of Hercules was known to fifteenth century Italy, the theme was not taken over extensively by the Neo-Platonists. Erwin Panofsky has suggested that Titian's "Sacred and Profane Love" (c. 1515), inspired by Bembo's Gli Asolani, can be interpreted as a type of Hercules' Choice, but this interpretation has been challenged. For the Choice of Hercules, as Ficino states, was only between the active life (Juno) and the life of pleasure (Venus);
Hercules in choosing heroic virtue was forced to endure his labors without happiness until his fiery death. The true decision must not be a choice between these two alternatives, nor even a choice for the contemplative life (Minerva), but rather an acceptance of all three of these allegorical goddesses according to their merits: A Judgment of Paris in which wisdom, power, and pleasure are harmoniously fused and mysteriously reconciled. The contemplative idea, a way of life vigorously defended throughout the Christian Middle Ages, is here seen subordinate to a mystic synthesis of hitherto discordant elements—a discordia concors. Professor Kristeller has pointed out that Ficino, despite his stated position here, actually was a strong advocate of the medieval contemplative ideal in terms of mystical transcendence, but the concept of discordia concors as a pattern for man's happy state also became a central doctrine for his Neo-Platonic followers. Thus, for example, Landino in the first dialogue of his Disputationes Camaldulenses (wr. c. 1475) debates the merits of the active and the contemplative life: Within the dialogue Alberti first supports the contemplative life; Lorenzo de' Medici then defends the active life, using Hercules as a prominent example; Alberti insists on the need for inner wisdom; and the dialogue ends when the combatants agree that, though the contemplative ideal is ultimately the most satisfying, both contemplative wisdom and active striving should exist in harmonious counterpose. The rigid moral dichotomy of Hercules' Choice, in which active
virtue was chosen over sensuous pleasure, was replaced by a Neo-Platonic symbolic triad in which sensual beauty revealed its own virtuous and spiritual aspects within itself.

The Italian Neo-Platonists also paid little attention to Hercules' labors, for their concern was not with the hero's virtuous action but rather with his madness and apotheosis as evidence of Divine furor and Divine Love.

Of the labors, only Hercules' effeminacy under the rule of Omphale is considered, and that only implicitly. The doctrine of discordia concors, often presented in terms of the union of Mars and Venus, could have been recognized as applicable to the legend of Hercules and Omphale. The similarity is indeed more striking when we recall the satiric tradition that pointedly kept alive the account of Hercules' effeminacy, for the Neo-Platonists interpreted the Androgyne myth and hermaphroditism as forms of possible harmonious union. But, despite these possibilities for adaptability of the Hercules-Omphale legend to the Mars-Venus configuration, I have found no specific evidence of such associations among the Italian Neo-Platonists.

Hercules does appear among these Neo-Platonic writings, however, in two main forms: as an epileptic madman, and as the Man-God infused with Divine Love. The former picture of the hero has been thoroughly sketched in a recent article by Rolf Soellner, who has indicated how Hercules' madness, both in his murder of his wife Megara and their children and also in his rages while wearing the shirt of
Nessus, was seen by the Renaissance as a pathological disease commonly attributed to melancholy or epilepsy. Epilepsy was, moreover, further recognized as divine and prophetic by the Neo-Platonists, so that, as Soellner states, "The ancient hero, the prototype of energy, moral strength and rational control, became the symbol of ecstasy and enthusiasm. From here it was only a small step to associate him with the theory of prophetic inspiration and divine creation by artists and poets, a theory widely current in the Renaissance."

For the Italian Neo-Platonists, though, Hercules' madness was chiefly a prelude to his glorious death. In the Neo-Platonist philosophy of love, established by Ficino's Commentary on the Symposium and carried on in the sixteenth century trattati d'amore, furor led to an immortal, mystical union with Heavenly Beauty; though there might be moments of prophetic insight, one must die to unite his soul completely with Divine Love.

The death and apotheosis of Hercules, then, was the only theme that held real interest for the Neo-Platonists. Ficino's ideal of the contemplative life, seen as a continuous meditation upon Divine Love, allowed small favor to the figure of Hercules as the heroic symbol of virtuous action. But Hercules the demigod, his body charred on the pyre at Mount Oeta, could be more appropriate. Landino in De Vera Nobilitate (1469) associated Hercules' bodily death and spiritual resurrection with the immortality of the soul,
but it was left to Pietro Bembo as the speaker in Baldassare Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* (1508-13) to present the theme in full. Bembo's *Gli Asolani* (1505) had discussed Divine Beauty or Love, but hardly with the same mystical fervor that Castiglione attributed to him in *Il Cortegiano*. In Castiglione's treatise, after having alluded in passing to Hercules and Theseus as euhemeristic "magnanimi Eroi" who deserved divine honors, the author returns to Hercules in Bembo's eloquent oration ending Book IV. Here the concept of divine *furore* is linked with the sacred fire, leading inevitably to immortal heavenly union in death: First the soul, exercised in intellectual love, is mystically drawn to the light of angelic beauty, seen as a purifying flame:

... she feeleth a certein previe smell of the right aungelike beaute, and ravished with the shining of that light, beginneth to be inflamed, and so greedily foloweth after, that (in a maner) she weseth dronken and beside her self, for coveting to coope her self with it. ... And therefore burninge in this most happye flame, she arryseth to the noblest part of her (which is the understanding) and there no more shadowed with the darke night of earthlye matters, seeth the heavenlye beawtye...  

But such angelic visions are only in regards to the soul's particular transcendent beauty. The soul must then pass on to an awareness of universal beauty and love, to a state of immortal apotheosis:

Thus the soule kindled in the most holye fire of true heavenlye love, fleeth to coople her selfe with the nature of Aungelles, and not ony ye cleane forsaketh sense, but hath no more neede of the discourse of reason, for being chaungeth into an Aungell, she understandeth all thinges that may be understoode: and without any veile or cloude, she seeth the
meine sea of the pure heavenly beauty and receiveth it into her, and enjoyeth that soveraigne happiness, that can not be comprehended of the senses. . . . And therefore, as commune fire trieth golde and maketh it firme, so this most holy fire in soules destroyeth and consumeth what so ever there is mortall in them, and relieveth and maketh beautyfull the heavenly part, whyche at the first by reason of the sense was dead and buried in them. This is the great fire in the whiche (the Poetes wryte) that Hercules was burned on the topp of the mountaigne Oeta: and through that consumynge with fire, after hyss death was holy and immortall.²³

Bembo's speech ends with a fervid prayer to Celestial Beauty or Love to make men drunk with lower pleasures so that, purged by the sacred flame, they "maye dye a most happie and livelye death," a death presumably similar to Hercules'. Castiglione's Il Cortegiano, which was translated into English by Sir Thomas Hoby in 1561 and was widely current in sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe, was to make the Neo-Platonic death of Hercules easily available to the Renaissance imagination.

Another love treatise, more philosophical in tone, was the Dialoghi d'Amore (c. 1501-2) of Leone Ebreo Ḫudah Abrabanel.⁷ Whereas Ficino and others such as Bembo and Castiglione spoke of Divine Love as man's aspiring love for God, Leone defined Divine Love as God's love for man. Thus, though Leone alludes to the Platonic raptus, or the copulative union of man with God, and similarly to Hercules' heavenly union with Hebe (pp. 123-4), his main concern is with Hercules' birth. The discussion of Jove's union with Alcmena, contained within a lengthy section in Book II on the allegorical meanings of classical myth (pp. 98-155), is indicative of the Neo-Platonic emphasis on Hercules' divine
nature, Hercules, for the Greeks, is a man "dignissima ed excelente in virtu, e questi tali nascono di donne ben complessionate, belle a buone" (p. 127). Amphityron, not possessing the virtue and influence of Jove, was not therefore able to generate "di quella Ercole, il quale per le sue divine virtù, participate da Iove, fu vero figliuolo di Giove e figuralmente, o strumentalmente, di Amfitritone" (p. 128). Other references to Hercules similarly refer to him as the son of Jove (pp. 107, 109).

In short, for the Italian Neo-Platonists Hercules is a symbol of the God-Man, transfigured by Divine Love. His divine birth, his madness his apotheosis—only these aspects of the myth are taken by the Neo-Platonists and adapted to their mystical philosophy of love. Hercules' Choice and his ensuing virtuous labors presented a rigid distinction between the life of sensuous ease and the life of heroic moral endeavor, but the Neo-Platonists were not concerned with such dichotomies nor with the active life as man's highest ideal. For Ficino and his followers the life of mystic contemplative communion with the Divine was man's highest happiness; man was neither animal nor angel, but rather a mystic fusion of both, a microcosmic discordia concors able to communicate with his macrocosmic God. The Herculean legacy left by the Neo-Platonists to their sixteenth century French successors and eventually to Spenser and Chapman was that of a man infused with Divinity—though the Hercules Christ analogy is never explicit with these early
Italians, through them it was implicitly available to the sixteenth century Renaissance mind.

Though the Neo-Platonic presentation of Hercules seems almost blasphemous, we must be careful not to underestimate the intent of Ficino and his followers. The religious fusions of these Florentines in their *priscae theologiae*, though they appear heretical in their syncretic linking together of the most disparate and obscure religious beliefs under what Professor Seznec has called "universal theism, with Platonism as its gospel," were not attempts to subvert Christianity but were rather a means to reconcile Christianity with all other religions and thus show its universal power. Whereas the Neo-Platonists never explicitly equate Hercules with Christ, as Ronsard was led to do later in Reformation France, they present Hercules as the God-Man who implicitly, in his natural heroic figure, reveals the Christian hero.

Similarly, though the harmonious surface appearance of Quattrocento art and architecture seems neo-pagan in spirit, such harmony and beauty of form was itself a key to the hidden mysteries of its symbolic form. Renaissance artists felt no qualms in uniting classical subject matter and motif in their works, which could be considered eloquent paean to the spirit and achievements of man. At the roots of Renaissance art, though overshadowed at times by dank foliage seemingly hedonistic and secular in color, lay the traditions of medieval Christian and moral exegesis.
The fifteenth and early sixteenth century Italians, however, were apparently unconcerned with explicit Christian allegorizing of the Hercules myth. At the peak of the Italian Renaissance the world of classical heroism and humanism was exalted and glorified—for a brief period man's artistic vision of his world could soar to a height of both Dionysian and Apollonian extremes. While Pico could speak of man as Proteus, made "neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with freedom of choice and with honor, as though the maker and molder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer,"\(^{29}\) Antonio Pollaiuolo could paint and sculpture dynamic, muscular, nude Hercules figures for aristocratic Florentines. Pollaiuolo's three large Hercules canvases painted for Lorenzo de' Medici in 1460 have been lost, but they were praised highly by Vasari and popularized the labors of Hercules as a familiar theme in Quattrocento art. As Maud Cruttwell has shown, Hercules' labors appeared "as decoration for the thrones of Madonnas, for marriage chests, for saloons, and even in the ornamentation of the Tomb erected by Charles VIII in the Cathedral of Tours, to the memory of his children."\(^{31}\) Outside of Italy Pollaiuolo's work inspired Dürer's "Hercules Killing the Stymphalian Birds" (1500), though Dürer's interest in Hercules was evident elsewhere before 1500. Yet, despite the medieval traditions of Christian typology and of allegorical interpretation of classical myth, these
Renaissance portrayals of Hercules stand out in vivid naturalistic clarity. The figure of Hercules is not distorted into a Christian type, but is rather glorified as a heroic human ideal.

Quattrocento art presented Hercules as a muscular, robust hero, but yet as a figure in whom Christian and classical virtù were harmoniously reconciled. Momentarily, Hercules as exhibited in his naturalistic pose of the classical hero could be accepted as an implicit, symbolic ideal for the Renaissance man and the Christian hero; further allegorical interpretation or pietistic suggestiveness was unnecessary. In this sense both Quattrocento art and architecture can be considered as forms of religious humanism, though this humanism was not necessarily limited to the Christian revelation alone. Rudolf Wittkower, in discussing Quattrocento architecture, has revealed the implicit religious symbolism underlying the harmonious proportion of Renaissance buildings. Christianity still permeates the Renaissance world, but in somewhat different guise. As Wittkower says, "What had changed was the conception of the godhead: Christ as the essence of perfection and harmony superseded Him who had suffered on the Cross for humanity; the Pantocrator replaced the Man of Sorrows."

Hercules appears as a realistic hero, without distortion of his rounded classical image, both in Quattrocento art and in the satiric emphasis on Hercules in Quattrocento literature. The satiric approach to the myth
serves to undercut much of the symbolic virtues attributed to Hercules by the Neo-Platonists and by earlier medieval allegorizers, and indeed in the chivalric epics of Pulci and Ariosto there is a general attack on the overt allegorizing traditions of the Middle Ages. Hercules is portrayed as a classical hero, but his symbolic relevance is ironically parodied in the urbane and secular context.

In Luigi Pulci's *Il Morgante* (pr. 1483), despite the religious invocations that introduce each canto, the tone is playful and exuberant, as Byron later recognized. Here the heroic deeds and valor of Rinaldo, Orlando, and Oliver are alluded to as Herculean, but these Christian heroes are overshadowed and burlesqued by the grotesque giant Morgante and his ludicrous antics. In the *Orlando furioso* (1516-32) of Ludovico Ariosto the comic and ironic tone is predominant. Hercules, faced with the choice between the bleak struggle for Virtue and the luxuriant ease of Vice, accepted a life of heroic virtuous endeavor; in Ariosto's poem the Herculean Choice of the hero leads to abandonment of the quest and the life of sensuality. In Canto VI Rogero chooses the steep and rocky path to Logistil, only to ascend to a green meadow and the enchantments of Alcina's bower of bliss. Hercules' Choice has here ironically resulted in Hercules' downfall, and Rogero is soon metamorphosed into the woeful condition of Hercules under the rule of Omphale, complete with dangling bracelets, pearls hanging from his ear, and curled and perfumed locks, as viewed
here in Harington's translation:

He had such wanton wamanish behauour,
As though in Valence he had long beene bred,
So chaunged in speech, in manners and in favoour,
So from himselfe beyond all reason led,
By these enchantments of this am'rous dame,
He was himselfe in nothing but in name. (VII. 47)

Similarly the usual allegorical connotations of the
Hercules-Antaeus struggle are reversed, for the Saracen
Mandricardo appears as Hercules whereas Orlando himself is
the earthbound Antaeus (IX. 71, XXIII. 66). Though Ariosto
states at the beginning of Canto VII that "to them, my tale
may seeme a fable, / Whose wits to vnderstand it are not
able" (VII. 1), a statement heavily relied upon by later
allegorizers of Ariosto such as Harington, the extent of
Ariosto's actual allegorical intent is limited by his witty
and ironic point of view. In Canto XXXV. 18-29, the wise
St. John explains to Astolfo that heroic fame is perhaps
only a chimera made up by flattering poets—the actual deeds
of men depend on the pens of poets and historians to
immortalize them. Hector and Achilles may not have been so
brave, nor Aeneas and Caesar so devout, nor Penelope so
chaste as poets have depicted them. Here Ariosto's approach
to the chivalric epic is almost cynical in tone. We can
catch the same spirit of mockery in the annual pasquinades
written to be placed on the fragmentary Pasquino statue in
Rome, a statue at times representing Hercules. In all
these instances, in Pulci, Ariosto, and the pasquinades,
we note a similar undercutting of the positive allegorical

treatment of the classical or chivalric hero. The Herculean

hero retains his virtuous symbolic associations, but in the
context of these works such virtues of the hero are sati-
rized and serve to reinforce the basically ironic struc-
ture of the action.

At the same time that Hercules and the classical past

were being brilliantly portrayed in Quattrocento literature
and art, however, the Italian humanists were turning from
the medieval monistic view of history to a new critical
and pluralistic historiography, stimulated in part by their
Italian nationalism and political loyalties. Leonardo
Bruni's Historiarum Florentini Populi and Machiavelli's
Istorie Fiorentine are indicative of the shift of view-
point: The medieval inclusive but static concept of the
predestined Four Monarchies of the World, ending at the Day
of Judgment, is here supplanted by a dynamic pluralistic
historicism in which states rise and fall in cyclic patterns,
with distinct beginnings and ends.

This Renaissance historical relativism is directly re-
lated to the awareness of the classical age as a distinct
historical phenomenon and further led to the humanist
concern for classical veneration and imitation. Yet, in
addition, the new relativistic historiography made the Re-
naissance moderns more aware of their historical im-
portance, as opposed to the ancients, and thereby fore-
shadowed the querelle of the ancients and moderns that was
to be fought out so intensively in the seventeenth cen-
41 tury. Renaissance historiography thus appeared to have
brought forth antithetical results—both an interest in
classical imitation and a rejection of classical signifi-
cance. In actuality, however, most humanist interest
in imitation was not in slavish copying, but rather in
emulatio, so that the ability of modern Renaissance man
to emulate the essential nature of harmonious classical
forms was itself seen as a glorious achievement. Hercules
was not seen by Pollaiuolo or Michelangelo as an effete
classical model, but rather as a heroic inspiration to
modern achievement in his perfected symbolic form.

Nevertheless, though the humanists turned to the
classics and to mythology with increased interest, their
critical propensities eventually brought the figure of
Hercules in doubt. Higden, we recall, had already been
skeptical of the multiple Hercules' associations available
to him in the fourteenth century; the later Renaissance
interest in the critical veracity of classical sources led
to rejection of the Hercules legends from even those nation-
al histories in which he would be most appropriate as a
dynastic forebear. The Quattrocento historians took the
first step by rejecting the medieval universal histories
and Hercules' place in that typological context; the final
eradication of Hercules from the national histories was not
to come until the later sixteenth century, but the seeds
of doubt remained nascent in men's minds throughout the
Stepping beyond the bounds of Quattrocento Italy we do not find the Renaissance in full bloom in the Northern countries. Fifteenth century France, as Johan Huizinga and numerous other scholars have pointed out, still retained much of its medieval character. The appearances of Hercules in this late medieval context, however, do point toward his Renaissance resurgence a century later.

At the beginning of the century Italian born Christine de Pisan, writing contemporaneously with Salutati, approached the myth in positive and allegorical fashion: Her _La Cité des Dames_ (1405), derived for the most part from Boccaccio's satiric _De Claris Mulieribus_, presents Hercules in the narrative as a martial hero and conqueror of the Amazons. Earlier in _L'Epistre d' Othea à Hector_ (1401) Christine had also included allegorical glosses with her discussions of the myth: Hercules' strength for example, was not only corporeal but was also the strength of constancy and steadfast virtue; his descent to Hell to rescue his friends Perithoeus and Theseus was comparable to Christ's descent into limbo to rescue the prophets.

The satiric presentation of Hercules' fall to women was well known to fifteenth century France: Not only did Christine de Pisan follow Boccaccio's _De claris mulieribus_, later translated into French in 1538, but Laurant de
Premierfait's expanded French translation of Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium* was to serve as the model for Lydgate's English version, *The Fall of Princes*. In addition, Hercules as the weakened victim of love appeared in the fifteenth century French poems of Michault Taillevent and King René, and in a tapestry done for Henri Baude.

De Premierfait's translation of Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum*, however, was markedly toned down from the acrimonious original. The Boccaccio text was consistently expanded by De Premierfait, usually to the detriment of Boccaccio's concise and dramatic Latin prose. The life of Hercules in the French version includes, for example, added euhemeristic glosses on the battle versus the Lernean Hydra and a detailed, realistic account of Hercules' death (pp. 156-8). The original emphasis on the fall of Hercules to Iole is evident (pp. 165-8, 276) but there is more stress on the hero's chivalric qualities: Hercules is now "chevalereux et philosophe ensemble" (p. 156), or the "preux & noble chevalier" (p. 158). De Premierfait also adds an interesting long account of a debate between Poverty and Fortuna, beginning with their meeting at a fork in the road; Poverty as a Hercules figure finally wrestles Fortuna or Antaeus and thereby subdues this irrational object of man's desire (pp. 182-6). A further addition mentions the Gaul's worship of Hercules (pp. 221-2), a typical French association that would become commonplace for the later Pleiade as the "Hercule Gaulois." These interpolations of De Premierfait
serve to enrich the positive symbolic associations of the myth without denying its realistic particularity; Hercules falls to lust, but the fifteenth century emphasis on his heroic stature tends to focus blame more directly on Iole than on Hercules.

De Premierfait's emphasis on euhemeristic interpretations and the Gallic Hercules bring to mind the chief source for the Hercules legends in late medieval France—the euhemeristic Trojan romance. Benoît de Sainte-More's twelfth century Roman de Troie, a central authority for later accounts of the Troy legends, was perhaps available to Raoul Le Fèvre who in 1464 wrote the extensive Le Recueil des Histoires de Troyes, one of the first books to be translated and printed in English by William Caxton and a prominent fifteenth century source for the euhemeristic Hercules legends. Le Fèvre's work, which we shall look at more closely in Caxton's popular translation, deviated widely from previous accounts by enlarging to immense proportions Hercules' role in the narrative and the discussion of his labors. Saving the story of Jason and the Golden Fleece for a separate book, Le Fèvre expanded the life and labors of Hercules in thirty-seven long chapters of euhemeristic narrative. Here we note a blending of the realistic literal narrative with its allegorical correspondences in the very vividness of the realistic detail—whereas the allegorization of the myth is not explicitly glossed concurrent with the narrative, it is
implicit in the panoramic display of the hero's magnificent deeds.

Why did Le Fèvre concentrate his attention particularly upon Hercules? As Jean Seznec has pointed out, the Burgundian court had acclaimed Hercules as the heroic founder of their dynasty as early as the fourteenth century; 47 Le Fèvre's Herculean emphasis in the Troy legends would have had an appreciative audience at court. The legendary Trojan origin of France, moreover, was a theory widely current in universal histories, Trojan romances, and French chronicles throughout the Middle Ages. In short, though fifteenth century France is not considered to be Renaissance in its character, the Hercules myth had in the works of De Premierfait and later of Raoul Le Fèvre increased in euhemeristic vitality and in potential symbolic power. The main attributes of the Renaissance Hercules figure are evident here—the realistic image, the underlying symbolic correspondences, the historical associations with a dynastic state, and the traces of satiric denigration—but for the fullest exhibition of the Herculean hero we must wait until Du Bellay and Ronsard.

In fifteenth century England the late medieval qualities evident in France are manifested in the rise of the morality play on one hand and the growing interest in folk balladry and domestic life (as in the Paston letters)
on the other. Hercules is depicted for the most part in
euhemeristic terms, tempered somewhat by a satiric
emphasis that is not effectively subdued until the time of
Caxton.

The chief fifteenth century English castigator of
Hercules, as might be expected, is moral John Gower.
Gower rails vehemently against Hercules' adulterous passion
for Iole. The poet is familiar with contemporary accounts of
Hercules in the romances of Alexander and of Troy—there are
references to the pillars of Hercules in India and an ex-
tensive narration of the Jason-Medea legend—but Gower's
central interest in Hercules is directed toward the hero's
base and effeminate lasciviousness. In the Confessio
Amantis Hercules, a man who was deified by the Greeks for his
marvellous strength, did not deserve his honors:

For he a man was full of sinne,
Which proved was upon his ende,
For in a rage himself he brende;
And such a cruel mannes dede
According nothing with godhede. (IV. 1098-102)

Yet Hercules' sin was not only that of suicide. His mad-
ness from the poisoned shirt of Nessus was caused by his
lustful deceit with Iole, which in turn led to Deianeira's
fatal gift. Lust metamorphoses manly heroes into irrational,
effeminate weaklings. To illustrate, Gower cites the example
of Sardanapalus (VII. 4297-343) and pointedly mentions
elsewhere the women's clothing that Iole forces on Hercules,
with the somewhat comic results in the tale of Hercules and
Faunus (II. 2262–71, V. 6807–935). Hercules' infidelity to his wife Deianeira is the ultimate cause of his depravity and raving suicide in other of Gower's works, such as in the French Cinkante Balades (XLIII.1) and the Traité pour essampler les amantz marietz (VII.i-i11); we also find this derogatory attitude toward the myth evident early in the century in James II of Scotland's The Quare of Jelusy, where the madness and death of Hercules are linked with the ill effects of base desire and jealousy.

The satiric critique of the Hercules myth, however, was soon countered by a growing emphasis on the noble qualities of the hero, evidenced in the works of Lydgate and popularized through Caxton's translation of Raoul Le Fèvre's Recueil. Though the satiric emphasis that had been strongly set forth in Boccaccio's late fourteenth century De casibus virorum illustrium and De claris mulieribus remained prevalent in fifteenth century France and England, by the end of the century we are much closer to a more positive acceptance of Hercules as a virtuous hero. The late-century fusion of euhemerism and symbolic meaning approaches the symbolic realism that we here associated with the Renaissance.

In the 1430's John Lydgate translated Boccaccio's De Casibus Virorum from De Premierfait's French version as The Fall of Princes. Lydgate's translation like De Premierfait's placed more stress on the positive aspects of the myth: The name Hercules became a generic title for the virtuous hero; Hercules fell not chiefly because of his
lust, but rather because of the fraud and treachery of Deianeira. Lydgate follows Boccaccio in mentioning Hercules' effeminacy and his infidelity with Iole, with other explicit warnings against sensuality and its concomitant effeminacy in a virtuous prince, but these derogatory elements are not explored with the insistency of Boccaccio's malice. Whereas Boccaccio cited Hercules mainly as an example of a degenerate fall to lust, the fifteenth century Laurent de Premierfait and Lydgate elaborate the positive virtues of the noble hero and the symbolic character of his name. The effeminate degradation of Hercules is not forgotten, but the accounts of the life and death of Hercules as established by Boccaccio and other fourteenth century writers are realistically and euhemeristically amplified and are increasingly recognized in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as symbolic of virtuous heroism. A more positive approach to the satiric connotations of the myth appears further in Lydgate's Temple of Glas, where Hercules' love for Deianeira is associated with the fidelity of Antony and Pyramus; in The Complaint of the Black Knight Hercules is cited as an example of those true lovers slain by love: "For al his trouthe, yet he loste his lyf."

Yet though Lydgate in these works raises Hercules' virtuous prestige almost to the level of the Quattrocento Neo-Platonists, he is still consciously medieval. In The Assembly of Gods, for example, Hercules is among those
noble worthies who have fallen to their death despite earthly fame and glory; later in the same poem Lydgate condemns the fables of pagan poets that have been accepted by a heretical populace as divine symbolic truth rather than as mere figural foreshadowings.

Lydgate's Herculean references here and in his *Troy* Book are placed in euhemeristic context, but the allegorical traditions collected together in the fourteenth century were well known in fifteenth century England. Boccaccio's *De Genealogia Decorum* was avidly read by John Whethamstede, Abbot of St. Albans, and was owned by his protector Duke Humphrey of Gloucester. Lydgate explicitly alludes to the treatise in *The Fall of Princes* (written under Gloucester's patronage) and in *The Siege of Thebes*, and Caxton turned to *De Genealogia* in his *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* and his *Historie of Jason*. The influence of Salutati and of his *De Laboribus Herculis* is also evident in the humanist circle about Duke Humphrey: Salutati corresponded with Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, his works are quoted by Whethamstede, and Duke Humphrey's own copy of *De Laboribus* was apparently presented to the University of Oxford.

With these allegorical traditions in the background we note a gradual merging of both the euhemeristic and allegorical traditions of Herculean interpretation in late fifteenth century England. In the Trojan romances, for
example, Lydgate's *Troy Book* provided an extensive compila-
tion of the euhemeristic accounts of Hercules and his
destruction of Troy, but Raoul Le Fèvre's voluminous *Le
Recueil des Histoires de Troyes*, when translated by Caxton
and printed in Bruges in 1475, focused further attention
on Hercules as a realistic figure of latent symbolic
stature.

Caxton's translation, one of the first books to be
printed in English, was immensely popular in Renaissance
England. Little attention was here paid to the actual
destruction of Troy: Of the thirty seven chapters dealing
with Hercules, the quarrel with Laomedon and the de-
struction of Troy comprise only four. Though the lengthy
account of the Hercules legends is purportedly euhemeristic,
without explicit allegorical glosses, Caxton cites as one
of his few sources Boccaccio's *De genealogia*. The
euhemeristic framework for the myth, already questioned by
Ranulf Higden in the fourteenth century, seems here wholly
inadequate as a justification for the extensive magnificent
splendour of Hercules as the noble and virtuous hero.

Hercules in Caxton's narrative display of his heroic deeds
has stepped beyond euhemeristic and typological limits—
he is not merely a *figura* for the later Christ, he is to a
great extent the Christian hero himself. Note the implicit
allegorical meanings underlying Deianeira's realistic
lament at Hercules' death; the lament does not suggest
future typological fulfillment but rather reveals a hero
already of divine stature:

Alas, what have I done? the most notable man of men, shining among the Clerks, he that traversed the strange Coasts of the Earth and Hell; he that bodily conversed among men, was familiar with the Sun, Moon, and Stars, is dead by my cause. . . . He that was the Fountain of Sciences, by whom the Athenians sharpened their wits and judgments; he that made the Monsters of the Sea to tremble in their Abismes, destroyed the Monsters of Hell, confounded the Monsters of the Earth, Tyrants he corrected, insolent and proud, the humble and meek he enhaunised and exalted: He that made no treasure but of Vertue: subdued all the Nations of the World, conquering them with his Club, and if he had pleased or been ambitious, might have attained to be King of the East, West, North and South, of the Seas and Mountains. Of all these he might have named himself Lord, by good right, if he had pleased. Alas, alas, I was born in an unlucky hour! When so high and mighty a Prince is dead by my simpleness: he was the glory of men. There was never none like him, nor ever shall be.64

The euhemeristic framework in Caxton’s translation of Le Fèvre, however, remained as a justification for the extensive emphasis there on the Hercules myth, despite the archetypal significance given to the myth as it was actually presented. Raoul Le Fèvre was undoubtedly motivated in his adulation of Hercules by the familiar legend of the Gallic Hercules as the dynastic founder of Gaul, but in England Hercules was also later taken up as a historical forebear of the Tudors in the spurious chronicle of “Berosus,” published by Annius of Viterbo at the end of the fifteenth century. I shall discuss the effects of the Berosus chronicle in a later chapter on Renaissance England, but I might note here yet another euhemeristic link of Hercules with the founding of England: Hercules appears briefly in the fifteenth century English Arthurian romances.
In the fifteenth century legends of Merlin there is mention of a giant named Rion, king of Denmark and of Iceland, against whom young Arthur heroically battles. King Rion, a descendant of Hercules, carries a sword named "Marmyadoise," a sword passed down by his ancestor who, as the account notes, "ledde Jason in to the Isle of Colchos, for to feeche the flees of goolde, and with that swerde did hercules sle many a Geaunte in that londe, ... and the booke saith that Vulcan I-forged that swerde in the tyme of Adrastus, the kyng of Greece, that many a day hadde in his tresour." After a long and fierce struggle Arthur subdues Rion and captures his sword; the sword of Hercules has now passed on to Arthur, and in his dexterity with the weapon and his high praise of "Marmyadoise" we are provided with a foreshadowing of the Hercules-Arthur figure to be elaborated later in Spenser's Faerie Queene.

In England Hercules retains his euhemeristic significance as a figure important within the accounts of the glorious past of the English nation and monarchy. In this historical context he can possibly be compared in importance to Brutus or to Arthur. The euhemerized Hercules myth, in fact, was widely known in late medieval and Renaissance England—not only specifically in Lydgate and Caxton, but also intermittently throughout the medieval romances most popular with the English: the legends centering about the fall of Troy, the achievements of Arthur, and the heroic adventures of Alexander the Great.
Yet, underlying this euhemeristic foundation stirred the rotting doubts of critical historiography. Ranulf Higden's fourteenth century skepticism in the *Polychronicon* had led him to view the name Hercules as a symbolic tag for any virtuous hero; he had already gone beyond the position of Boccaccio, who in *De Genealogia Deorum* had attempted to distinguish multiple Hercules figures in euhemeristic fashion. In the fifteenth century the influence of the Italian humanists and their critical historiography began to seep into England: The critical historian Leonardo Bruni was well-known by the Duke of Gloucester circle; Tito Livio da Forli, another Italian humanist, came to England at Humphrey's request and wrote *Vita Henrici Quinti* (c. 1437), a regal biography that was an important forerunner of the more critical historical approach of Polydore Vergil and others in the sixteenth century.

Thus, though such fifteenth century chroniclers as Capgrave and Hardyng continued to present Hercules within their universal histories, the sixteenth century was to see the euhemerized Hercules accounts brought into open question. Moreover, even Hercules, symbol of virtue, was to face more continually his mirror image, Hercules, symbol of the inordinate fall to depravity, madness and lust. The sixteenth century stage upon which Hercules was to strut is scarred by bookmarks and spittle, yet the magnanimous hero will act his part in the best tradition of the High Renaissance.
NOTES

1 See Johan Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages (London, 1924), pp. 182-200; on French literature, see also Auerbach, Mimesis, pp. 203-29, and Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition, passim.


On the validity of the word "Renaissance" as an appropriate descriptive term for the period, see B.L. Ullman, "Renaissance: The Word and Underlying Concept," Studies in the Italian Renaissance, pp. 11-25, and Erwin Panofsky's massive Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art, Chaps. i and ii, pp. 1-113.

the approach of the Neo-Platonists, especially Pico, toward paganism and the lore of the occult.


6 Panofsky, *Hercules am Scheidewege*, pp. 173-80, and *Studies in Iconology* (New York, 1939), pp. 150-60. Panofsky's work was first challenged by Walter Friedlaender, "La tintura delle rose," *The Art Bulletin*, XX (1938), 320-4, and though Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries*, pp. 121-8, has answered Friedlaender, he has further suggested that the two female figures in the painting are not Twin Venuses but are rather Human Love or Pulchritudo and Celestial Love or Voluptas.


8 See Wind, pp. 78-81, 168-9.

9 The two ways of life, active and contemplative, were derived from Luke x. 38-42, as symbolized by Martha and Mary. Christ's preference for Mary or the life of contemplation was discussed in numerous medieval treatises, as for example in *The Book of Vices and Virtues*, ed. W. Nelson Francis, EETS OS 217 (London, 1942), pp. 220-3. Dante's preference for the contemplative life is well-known; apparently Wyclif and Chaucer were also within this tradition (see Frank Towne, "Wyclif and Chaucer on the Contemplative Life," *Essays Critical and Historical Dedicated to Lily B. Campbell*, U. Calif. Publ. English Studies I (Berkeley, 1950), pp. 3-14). The life of virtuous action was emphasized by humanists from Petrarch on, however; Petrarch, we recall, first resuscitates the Choice of Hercules from its medieval oblivion and urged the active ideal. On the Renaissance emphasis on the active ideal, see E.F. Rice, Jr., *The Renaissance Idea of Wisdom*, pp. 30-57.

Subtler Language (Baltimore, 1959), pp. 53-61, 175-80. The concept was of singular importance to Nicholas of Cusa, considered by Cassirer as a central figure of the Renaissance; see E. Cassirer, Individuum und Kosmos in der Philosophie der Renaissance, trans. Federico Federici (Firenze, 1935), pp. 21, 66, 72, 100, 141-2, 281.


13 Ficino does refer to Poliziano as a Herculean defender of the Florentine school versus "centium hydrae capita nostris liberis minitantia" ("Apologia" (1489), Opera, p. 574), and Landino in De vera nobilitate (1469) evokes Hercules as a moral hero, symbolic of Reason battling against the vices, but such references are few. The Neo-Platonists did not emphasize the moral actions of the hero. Poliziano himself later protested Ficino's Herculean label, and Landino evoked Hercules only to point to his death and immortality as analogous to that of the soul. See André Chastel, Marsile Ficin et l'Art (Genève, 1954), pp. 174-5 and p. 177, n. 5.


16 Rolf Soellner, "The Madness of Hercules and the Elizabethans," CL, X (1958), 309-24. Soellner refers to the writings of pseudo-Aristotle and the proverb "Herculanus morbus" as chief carriers of this epileptic Hercules tradition; I have also found mention of Hercules' fatal disease in Augustine, De Civitate Dei, XVIII.xii. On Hercules' melancholy, see also Poliziano, Miscellanea, XC, in Opera, p. 301, cited by Chastel, Marsile Ficin et l'Art, p. 177, n. 5.

17 Ibid., p. 315. For Hercules and prophetic epilepsy, see Ficino, Theologia Platonica de Immortalitate Animorum, XIII.ii, Opera, pp. 292-5.


19 Cited by Chastel, pp. 25, 175.

20 See P. Bembo's Asolani, trans. R.B. Gottfried, Indiana U. Publ. Humanities Series No. 31 (Bloomington, 1954), pp. 169-95. Bembo only mentions Hercules in Book I, pp. 58-9, where those who must confront the ferocity of love are considered to have a more fierce antagonist than Hercules did in the Hydra.


23 Ibid., pp. 360-1.

24 See the thorough discussion of Leone in Nelson, Renaissance Theory of Love, pp. 84-102.
25 Leone, *Dialoghi d'Amore*, ed. Santino Caramella (Bari, 1929). All following references are to this text.

26 Seznec, p. 98.


28 On this reintegration of classical subject matter and classical motif or representational image see Seznec, pp. 184-215.


31 Maud Cruttwell, *Antonio Pollaiuolo* (London, 1907), p. 77. See Miss Cruttwell's extensive discussion of Pollaiuolo's Hercules paintings and sculpture, with representative illustrations, on pp. 66-86.


35 Ibid., p. 27.


37 Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, trans. John Harington (London, 1591), VI. 55-6, VII. 8-69. All references to Ariosto
are to this translation.

38 Ibid., E2r, Mm4v.


41 See the important study of Hans Baron, "The Querelle of the Ancients and the Moderns as a Problem for Renaissance Scholarship," JHI, XX (1959), 3-22, espec. 11-2, 15-9, and his additional comments in "Secularization of Wisdom and Political Humanism in the Renaissance," JHI, XXI (1960), 141-3.

The recent article of Aldo Scaglione, "The Humanist as Scholar and Politian: The Conception of the Grammaticus," Studies in the Renaissance, VIII (1961), 49-70, espec. 50-1, arrives at similar conclusions: Poliziano, as a critical humanist scholar, advocates pluralistic historicism and yet is hostile to the principle of imitation in its most sterile form.

42 Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, esp. pp. 323-35. The debates over the validity of a French Renaissance period have been as heated as with the Italian Renaissance, with Charles H. Haskins, The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), leading the opposition. A recent study by Henry Hornik, "Three Interpretations of the French Renaissance," Studies in the Renaissance, VII (1960), 43-66, views the wide range of interpretations and arrives at a satisfactory conciliatory conclusion that there was indeed a sixteenth century French Renaissance; Hornick's discussion of late medieval France is on pp. 53-60.

43 Christine de Pisan, The Boke of the Cyte of Ladys, trans. Brian Anslay (London, 1521), I.xviii, Gg4v-Hh3r.
44 Christine de Pisan, The C. Hystoryes of Troye, trans. R. Wyer (London, c. 1540), III, B3r-7v; XXVII, Glv-2v. Both of these works of Christine, as indicated in these translations, were known to sixteenth century England. See Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition, p. 32 and note.


46 H. Bergen, ed. Lydgate's Fall of Princes, I, xiii-xviii, analyzes the De Premierfait translation and its relation to Boccaccio's original. The De Premierfait extracts are in the Bergen Lydgate edition, Volume IV; all following references are to this edition.

47 Seznec, p. 25.

48 See Georges Doutrepont, Jean Lemaire de Belges et la Renaissance, Memoires Académie royale de Belgique (Bruxelles, 1934), passim, and Paul Laumonier, Oeuvres Complètes de Ronsard (Paris, 1914-9), VIII, 133.


50 Gower, Confessio Amantis, V.3247-4222, and also V. 7197-219.


52 The significant references to Hercules in Lydgate are as follows: I.876-82 (Man need not prove faith by the labors of Hercules); I.2731-4, 4297-8, 4361-81 (Hercules and Theseus, the "seconde Hercules"); I.5038-51 (Life and death of Hercules); I.6616-7, VII.406-10 (Hercules' fall due to women and lechery); III.402-707 (Poverty versus Fortuna); IV.3528-34 (Gallic Hercules). Incidental references are at: III. 3909-20, V.2756-7, VI.2201, VIII.158, IX.3259-62. For a thorough discussion of Lydgate's reworking of De Premierfait
and his relation to Boccaccio, see Bergen edition, IV, xx-xxii, and Wright, Boccaccio in England, pp. 5-23. Lydgate's interpolations on Theseus and the symbolic character of the title Hercules may have come from Boccaccio's De Genealogia, as Bergen has suggested (IV, 156).


55 R. Weiss, Humanism in England During the Fifteenth Century (Oxford, 1941), pp. 36 and 64.

56 Wright, Boccaccio in England, pp. 36-7.


58 Weiss, p. 36, n. 9.

59 Ullman, Studies in the Italian Renaissance, pp. 345-9. The Boethian references to the myth were also known. Thomas Usk follows Boethius when he alludes to Hercules' victory over Busiris in The Testament of Love, II.vii.117-8, ed. Skeat, Chaucerian and Other Pieces, p. 73 and note, p. 471.

60 I have noted in the STC and in Wing thirteen extant translated editions of Le Fèvre's Recueil up to the end of the seventeenth century: 1475, 1502, 03, 53, 96, 1607, 17, 36, 63, 70, 76, 80, 84. Book II, which is comprised entirely of Hercules legends, went through four separate editions in the seventeenth century: 1663, 70, 76, 80.

61 William Caxton, Recuyell of the Hystoryes of Troye (Bruges, 1475), I.38-43, and Book II complete (31 chapters). The account of Jason and the Fleece, plus much other
material on Jason, was incorporated into a separate volume by Le Fèvre that Caxton also translated as The History of Jason (1477), ed. John Munro, EETS OS 111 (London, 1913). Here Hercules plays a minor role as Jason's boyhood friend (pp. 7-8) and later companion, both at the wedding of Pirithous and Hippodamia (pp. 8-11) and on the voyage of the Argonauts (pp. 69-159); in the account of the destruction of Troy (p. 187) no mention is made of Hercules' singular role.

62 Ibid., I.xli-xliii, II.ix.

63 See Wright, Boccaccio in England, p. 37.

64 Caxton, The Destruction of Troy. in Three Books. Wherein is contained the Prowess of the Valiant Hercules, With his Marvellous Deeds: Wonderful Works: And of his Death (London, 1708), II.31, p. 110. I have cited a later edition to indicate, by subtitle, the nature of Caxton's books as recognized by editors and readers as late as 1708.

65 Merlin or The Early History of King Arthur: A Prose Romance (c. 1450-60?), ed. Henry B. Wheatley, EETS OS 10 (London, 1865), Chap. xx, pp. 339-40. This is a translation from the twelfth century French prose version of Robert de Boron; see the extant Lestoire de Merlin, ed. H. Oskar Sommer, The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances, II (Washington, 1908), p. 230. See also the verse version by Henry Lovelich, Merlin (c. 1425), ed. Ernst A. Kock, EETS OS 185 (London, 1932), Chap. xx, ll. 23563-88, 23603-6; the source of this version is as yet unknown.

66 The prose Merlin, xx, pp. 341-7, 351, 353; Lestoire de Merlin, pp. 231-5, 239, 240; Lovelich, Merlin, xx, ll. 23607-4110, 24405-36, 24479-84.


CHAPTER IV

SIXTEENTH CENTURY ITALY AND FRANCE

1

The Quattrocento could admit pagan myth within a fragile High Renaissance synthesis of imagistic realism and allegorical concept, a synthesis that in no way denied either graphic sensual particularity or implicit symbolic framework. Hercules could appear as the unabashed classical hero, and yet all of his symbolic associations available from the medieval traditions of allegory and typology and re-emphasized by the Neo-Platonists could remain implicitly alive. Indeed, there seemed little need to profess these symbolic associations unduly: No extensive compilations of the allegorical Hercules interpretations appeared between Boccaccio and Salutati, at the end of the fourteenth century, and Conti, Giraldi, and Cartari, in the middle of the sixteenth century. Allegorical meaning remained implicit. Underlying Pollaiuolo's Quattrocento canvases of Hercules were the structural supports of Neo-Platonic allegory; the Florentine Neo-Platonists had stepped beyond the figural bounds of the Middle Ages by treating Hercules in his unabashed classical garb as a God-Man, comparable implicitly in esteem to Christ.
The open exuberance of the Quattrocento, however, was not to last. Despite its implicit symbolic relevance, High Renaissance art to the untutored eye appeared dangerously pagan both in form and in spirit. Moralistic reactions soon confronted this world of Renaissance art, of the mystic unities of Pico, and of the gay life of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. In Florence the Dominican monk Savonarola (1452-98) railed against worldly paganism, though with a mystical fervor itself associated with Neo-Platonism, whereas in Wittenberg in 1517 the German monk Luther nailed his Ninety-seven Theses on the Cathedral door. The Reformation, with Luther and Calvin and Zwingli, brought on the Counter-Reformation, with the formation of the Society of Jesuits (1540), the Spanish Inquisition, and the Council of Trent (1545-63). Under these conditions the exuberant, expansive art of Leonardo de Vinci and Ariosto became transformed into the anguished spirituality of El Greco and the chastened Christian tones of Tasso and Spenser—the Renaissance moved North, but within a sixteenth century environment markedly different from that of the Quattrocento. We have moved from the world of the Renaissance to that of the "Counter-Renaissance." \(^2\)

The complex artistic career of Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564), whose life straddles the turning point between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, can perhaps be noted here as an illustration of the change in outlook. Though Erwin Panofsky has recognized that Michelangelo's
style is "neither High Renaissance nor Manneristic, let alone Baroque," one can clearly see the difference between, for example, the artist's early David statue (1501-4) and his Christ figure of "The Last Judgment" (1536-41). Both figures have been associated with Hercules, but the open pagan character of the "David" contrasts markedly with the sombre spiritual power of "The Last Judgment's" Christ.

The David statue seems openly pagan in form. David is here not so much a Biblical as he is a classical Hercullean hero; his associations with Hercules as a symbol of fortitude in the medieval tradition, as we recall from Dante's De Monarchia, may have been here in the artist's mind. In the earlier history of the marble block from which the statue was eventually carved Hercules was to have been the proposed subject. But the "David" as Michelangelo presented it is not an explicit allegorical image of Christian faith or medieval fortitude. As Professor de Tolnay has said concerning the nature of the statue, "The marble David of Michelangelo may be regarded as a sort of synthesis of the ideals of the Florentine Renaissance. In the accurate anatomy one finds Florentine spirit of scientific investigation; in the vigorous forms and the proud visage is recognizable the heroic conception of man as a free creature and as master of Fate." Nevertheless, underlying this naturalistic David statue lurks implicit conceptual meaning; the form of the "David" is itself symbolic of Neo-Platonic harmony, comparable to other Neo-Platonic
works of Michelangelo's such as the Tomb of Julius II, the Medici chapel, and various drawings of the 1525-34 period given to Tommasco Cavaliero.  

But Michelangelo's later years are of a different cast. Though the inspiration for many of the figures in "The Last Judgment" came apparently from classical mythology, so that the nude Christ takes the guise of a judging Apollo or Sun Diety whereas Mary has attributes of Venus, these images are gripped by the fevered anguish surrounding them on all sides. "The Last Judgment" has not the placid and controlled harmony of the work of Leonardo or Raphael, but rather the revolving spatial dynamism of what one critic has called "a sort of cosmic whirlpool." Not only does the spatial movement reveal the spiritual torment of the scene, but the figures themselves writhe in agony. As C.R. Morey says, "Michelangelo's powerful inhibited figures reflect the disparity between Christian emotion and the antique ideal, free human will and the will of God: the rational forms of classic sculpture were not made for the ecstasy of a Christian mystic, they writhe in the possession of an unfamiliar spirit and betray by brutal distortion, incongruous proportions and discordant composition the force of the collision of medieval Christianity with the Renaissance."  

The difference in tone between the early David and the later Christ is striking, though it can perhaps be argued that the "Last Judgment" merely conceals pagan mysteries openly avowed before. But the sixteenth century insistence on concealed truths or allegorical meanings as
justification for classical subject matter is itself
evidence of the moralistic and restrictive attitude of the
Counter-Reformation, in contrast to the uncritical accept-
ance of classical mythology in the Quattrocento. One need
only cite the lamentable sixteenth-century history of the
most notable High Renaissance works we have already mentioned:
Pulci's *Il Morgante* is "ecclesiastically revised" as early
as 1502, with further such revisions continuing through the
century.11 The moral allegorical commentaries on Ariosto's
*Orlando Furioso* begin with Lodovico Dolce in the 1542
edition and are continued by such writers as Tommaso Poracchi
(1568 ed.) and Pietro de Franceschi (1584 ed.), the latter
commentary of which was a main source for Harington's 1591
English edition and extensive commentary upon the poem.12
Even more regrettable, the nudity of Michelangelo's "David"
is covered by a fig-leaf while the nude figures of the
"Last Judgment" are not only defaced by journeymen painters
but the whole fresco is at one time considered for ob-
literation under a coat of plaster.13

The context within which these Cinquecento actions were
taken can perhaps be illustrated further by the following
decrees of the Council of Trent, meeting in their final
session in 1563. First, note the limitations imposed on
religious art through Church censorship:

... let the bishops diligently teach by means of
the stories of the mysteries of our redemption portrayed
in paintings and other representations the people are in-
structed and confirmed in the articles of faith ...
through the saints the miracles of God and salutary examples are set before the eyes of the faithful, so that they may give God thanks for those things, may fashion their own life and conduct in imitation of the saints and be moved to adore and love God and cultivate piety. But if anyone should teach or maintain anything contrary to these decrees, let him be anathema. . . . In the sacred use of images, all superstition shall be removed, all filthy quest for gain eliminated, and all lasciviousness avoided, so that images shall not be painted and adorned with a seductive charm. . . . That these things may be the more faithfully observed, the holy council decrees that no one is permitted to erect or cause to be erected in any place or church, howsoever exempt, any unusual image unless it has been approved by the bishop.\(^4\)

Similarly, the effects of the introduction of the Index of prohibited books and the following stipulations concerning secular writings were far-reaching indeed:

\[\ldots\] There is no reason, however, why those books should be prohibited which have been written in the vernacular for the purpose of pointing out the right way to live, to contemplate, to confess, and similar purposes, if they contain sound doctrine, just as popular sermons in the vernacular are not prohibited. . . . Books which professedly deal with, narrate or teach things lascivious or obscene are absolutely prohibited, since not only the matter of faith but also that of morals, which are usually easily corrupted through the reading of such books, must be taken into consideration, and those who possess them are to be severely punished by the bishops. Ancient books written by heathens may by reason of their elegance and quality of style be permitted, but may by no means be read to children.\(^5\)

Under these Counter-Reformation pressures Hercules is seen in more explicit allegorical terms. There is a return to the medieval traditions of allegorical interpretation and the Hercules who had momentarily appeared in Michelangelo's "David" is forcibly recalled to the explicit religious context of the "Last Judgment."\(^6\) By midcentury there have appeared three influential handbooks of mythological
interpretation, the first new compilations of this sort
since Boccaccio's fourteenth century De Genealogia Deorum,
and at the same time the interest in emblem literature and
other hieroglyphic material has begun to spread over all
of Western Europe. In short, allegory and typology flourish
widely in the Cinquecento—we need only compare the atti-
tudes toward allegory and the tones of Ariosto and Tasso to
realize how far the moral Counter-Reformation Christian
gentleman has distanced himself from his gay and ironic,
anti-allegoric predecessor.

The three mythographical manuals—those of Giraldi,
Conti, and Cartari—appeared between 1548 and 1556, but the
vogue for hieroglyphs and emblem literature had been current
since the beginning of the century. As early as 1419 the
Greek manuscript of Horapollo's Hieroglyphica had arrived in
Italy in the hands of a Florentine priest. Picino and his
circle were attracted to the work, which purported to provide
a key to the occult meanings of the symbols on the ancient
Egyptian obelisks; in 1505 the treatise was printed by Aldus,
and by mid-century with the commentary of Pieris Valeriano it
had spread throughout the world of the Cinquecento. A
counterpart to the hieroglyphs, besides contemporary symbolic
coins, heraldic imprese, and printers' marks, appeared in the
books of emblems, the first collection of which was brought
forth in 1531 by Andrea Alciati. The emblem, a type of
allegorical picture with an attached verbal explanation of
its meaning, was to be widely popular in the late sixteenth
and early seventeenth centuries, but already in Alciati's Emblemata we find depictions of Hercules surrounded by the Nemean lion and the Hydra, or Hercules at the breast of Juno.\textsuperscript{18} The allegorical meaning of Hercules' labors or of his divine nature are made explicit in Alciati: Hercules is presented in naturalistic detail, and yet the scene is allegorical in its spatial grouping together of disparate labors to focus attention more clearly on the moral interpretation of the myth. If the viewer does not readily see the didactic intent underlying the picture, there is then the further explanatory text. In short, this rising vogue for hieroglyphs and for emblems is symptomatic of an era of more conscious allegory whereby the medieval traditions of myth interpretation return as appropriate defenses for allowance of pagan myth in literature and the visual arts.\textsuperscript{19}

Hercules had remained a popular figure throughout the Quattrocento in the allegorical writings of the Neo-Platonists, though Ficino and his followers were concerned only with Hercules' death and apotheosis, not with his moral choice nor his active labors. The treatises of Boccaccio and Salutati must have been well-known to the Quattrocento, but the concern for conscious allegorical interpretations of the myth was countered by the ironic tones of Pulci and Ariosto. In the Cinquecento, however, the allegorized labors and life of Hercules reappear in full force. Early in the century Lilio Gregorio Giraldis Vita Herculis (1514) reintroduces the allegorical Hercules in a fashion similar to Salutati's
De Laboribus Herculis, with corresponding emphasis on the symbolic qualities of the name Hercules as a title for brave and virtuous heroes. Giraldi's work foreshadows his later mid-century mythographic manual in which similar emphasis is placed on symbolic names and etymologies, but even here in 1514 we note the emphasis on explicit symbolic associations. Hercules is both an euhemeristic hero and an explicit symbolic figure at the same time. Later in the century we note a work of Jacobus Bonus dealing more specifically with the typological associations of the myth, as the title indicates: De Vita & Gestis Christi eiusque Mysteriis & Documentis Opus Egregium . . . Carmine Heroico Elegantur ac Mirifice Congestum . . .: Eiusdem Iacobi Praeludium in Treis Distinctum Libros, trium Gratiarum Nominibus Appellatos, atque Herculis Labores & Gesta in Christi Figuram (Rome, 1526).

This resurgence of interest in the explicit allegorical and typological meanings of Hercules, and of pagan myth as a whole, then reaches a crest in the mid-century mythographical manuals of Lilio Giraldi, Natale Conti, and Vincenzo Cartari.

Though none of these three myth compilations are radically different in approach from their medieval predecessors, as Jean Seznec has effectively pointed out, they do look at the Hercules myth from slightly different perspectives. Lilio Gregorio Giraldi's De Deis Gentium Varia et Multiplex Historia . . . (Basel, 1548) is concerned for the most part with the names of the pagan gods and their etymologies and epithets. In a prefatory letter to his patron, Duke Ercole
(Hercules) II d'Este, Giraldi notes that he will speak of false gods in order to reveal the moral truths underlying their names; in speaking of these gods he will not, however, follow Boccaccio's genealogical stratagems nor his ruse of Demogorgon.²⁴ Yet Giraldi's treatise is hardly more critical than Boccaccio's De Genealogia. In his tenth section Giraldi proceeds to list, indiscriminately, the names and interpretations ascribed to Hercules that are available to him: the list of fifty-two different Herculean titles includes such appellations as Ogmion, Musagetes, Astrologus, and Sanctus, but also such less familiar titles as Rhinocolustes and Nuncupatus (pp. 280-6). Giraldi, aware of Varro's forty-three Hercules figures (p. 278), here overpasses his predecessor's accounts both in number and in profuse citation of sources and explanatory detail. Specific emphasis is directed to the traditional interpretations of Hercules as the sun, with the twelve labors as the Zodiac; as a philosopher, whose labors were victories over ignorance; and as a great territorial conqueror and king, temperate and just in his majestic rule (p. 279). Little reference, in contrast, appears concerning Hercules' lasciviousness, irrational madness, or gluttony. Giraldi, no doubt aware of the significant name of his own patron, Ercole II d'Este, the fourth duke of Ferrara, especially in a work of this sort that focussed attention on the interpretations of names, ignores for the most part the traditional satiric associations of the myth. The name Hercules appears only as a title
of most noble and virtuous praise.

Giraldi's Hercules references in De Deis Gentium had been adumbrated in his earlier Vita Herculis (1514), a work written under the patronage of Cardinal Ercole Rangone of Modena and sent to Ercole II d'Este. In fact, Giraldi is so conscious of the significance of the appellation Hercules that he continually alludes in De deis gentium to other Hercules figures of the day: Syntagma VIII is addressed with verses to Herculem Bentiolum (p. 230); syntagma X is addressed to Herculem Contrarium, whose merit and justice combine in his name (p. 269); Syntagma IV mentions Hercules Rangonius, the former student and patron of Giraldi's (p. 118); and Syntagma I recalls the days of the Herculean Pope Clement VII, when Hercules was considered the sacred prince of all Italy, not only of Ferrara (p. 36).

Nor is Giraldi the only writer to capitalize on the Herculean associations with which the major noble families of the Cinquecento linked themselves. Both the Este and the Gonzago families paid particular interest to the name Hercules through their common genealogical link with Ercole d'Este, the second duke of Ferrara. In the Este family, Alfonso I, the son of Ercole d'Este and a husband of Lucrezia Borgia, named his own son Ercole II, after the boy's grandfather. In the Gonzago family, Isabella d'Este, the daughter of Ercole d'Este and the wife of Francesco Gonzago, Duke of Mantua, named her son Ercole Gonzago, similarly after the baby's grandfather. Ercole II d'Este, the fourth duke of Ferrara,
was thus the first cousin of Ercole Gonzago, an eventual Cardinal and the Président of the Council of Trent. Interest in the Hercules legends and their symbolic interpretations in the Cinquecento, therefore, was stimulated not only by the renewed concern for allegorized pagan myth as a whole, but also by the particular links of Hercules with the most powerful dynastic families of the day.27

The associations of the Este family with Hercules are evident throughout the century. We have noted the references in the works of Giraldi above, but we can also see the Este-Hercules associations in Marcellus Palingenius' Zodiacus Vitae, written in the 1530's but later to be translated by Barnabe Googe as The Zodiac of Life (1560) and to be widely current in Renaissance England as a textbook and source of meditative philosophical verse.28 Palingenius dedicates his work to Ercole II d'Este, as did Giraldi, but he carries the Herculean associations even further than Giraldi had done in the Vita Herculis or was later to do in De Deis Gentium. The Zodiacus Vitae, as the name suggests, is structured in terms of twelve books, corresponding to the twelve signs of the zodiac. Was Palingenius familiar with the common astrological interpretation, emphasized in Giraldi, of Hercules as the sun, whose twelve labors constituted the zodiac? The answer seems apparent when we note further Palingenius' description of his own work and his references to Ercole II in his prefatory letter, as translated by Googe:

... your Grace (most excellent Prince) is one in our
dayes whom God hath giuen suche a minde that you account
nothing more beautifull, comly nor heaunely, then vertue
her selfe. . . . It is no wonder therefore, that I haue
here attempted to offer both my self and my labours to your
highness. . . . You are such a one as is able of himselfe
to discerne right from wrong. . . . By . . . persuasion
therefore, this labour of mine called the Zodiake of life
digested in twelve bokes, and many yeres in framing, I
present, giue & offer to your excellencie, to the end your
name may be the more famous and renowned hereafter. (93r-v)

The twelve labors of Palingenius, an epithet applied to the
work by Googe in his frontispiece to the Zodiake after 1576,29
thus serve to glorify the Herculean virtue of Ercole II d'
Este. Book I, or "Aries," begins with an invocation to
Phoebus Apollo to favor the poet so that he may "ascend the
Skies, / And there thy highe and Godly workes consider with
mine eyes" (p. 1). Indeed, Palingenius in his poetic labors
can only hope to approximate the Herculean glory of his patron:

For hope of glory and renowne, a name for to obtayne,
Hath caused men in vertuousnesse to take both care and payne.
And thou O famous worthy Prince, that Hercule hast to name,
Amongs the doughty Italian Dukes, of most renowned fame . . .
Drawe nere, and with a joyfull face thy Poete &ke vpon,
Willing to treade vnprued pathes that haue not yet bene gon:
And shewe thy favouer to a wight that now amased is.
So may Ferrara see thee long in perfect ioy and blis,
Til after this thy ioyfull life, a long and happy time,
Departing from the earth, thou shalt the starry heauen clime.
(PP. 1-2)

Once within the body of his text Palingenius does not center
his attention on the Hercules myth.30 The main reference to
the myth, however, is an exemplary rehearsal of Hercules'
career as a noble hero who eventually falls to effeminacy
and lust (pp. 33-4). The speaker Arete or Virtue, citing the
bestial metamorphoses of Circe's victims and of Hercules in
love, here admonishes her audience and perhaps also the
Ducal patron:

0 mad, to mad, which when he may, to Gods compared be
By reason rulde, yet brutish trayne to hunt delighteth he,
In vsing eft of lecherous actes, and pampering Venus frende,
His gredy paunch, and beastlinessse he followeth to his ende. (p. 34)

But whether or not this is directed to the Duke personally, the structural framework of the Zodiacus remains clearly associated with the Hercules solar myth and is addressed pointedly to the author's noble patron, Ercole II d'Este.

The Herculean ties with the Este family are further strengthened by what has been called "the most extravagantly idealized of the Italian epics of the Counter-Reformation,"31 the Ercole of G.B. Giraldi Cinthio, also dedicated to Duke Ercole II.32 Giraldi's epic, unfinished in 1557, is quite different in tone from Ariosto's Orlando Furioso or Pulci's Morgante: The sobering influence of the Counter-Reformation has brought about a marked return to overt allegorizing and moral didacticism. Thus the emphasis centers more on Hercules' moral choice and rational self-control than on either his madness or his death. There is much use of obtrusive allegorical figures, the epic hero undergoes a gradual growth of moral refinement, and appeals are made to the new Hercules, Ercole II d'Este, to struggle against his doctrinal foes, or the Stymphalian Protestants. Cinthio's work has suggestive parallels with Spenser's Faerie Queene, as has been recently noted;33 at least in prototype the Herculean
Arthur of Spenser's similarly unfinished epic is seen within these pages. What is important to note here, however, is the shift from the anti-allegorical approach of the Quattrocento realistic epic writers to the allegorical tones of the Cinquecento Counter-Reformation. Hercules, whose symbolic vigor was never really lost in the High Renaissance, has now become an overt exemplary figure whose significance, in the hands of lesser writers, appears extravagant and superficial.

The links of the name Hercules with the Este family, as we have seen here, focussed attention on the myth and its available allegorical interpretations. Besides the works of Giraldi, Palingenius, and Cinthio we might include Vicenzo Cartari's iconographical manual, dedicated to Luigi d'Este in 1556. Cartari's treatise, Le Imagini Colla Sposizione Degli Dei Degli Antichi, is not directly concerned with the name Hercules, but in its descriptions of mythological statues it includes Hercules as a figure symbolic of virtue and spiritual force. In Cartari's manual the mythological models are strange, eclectic figures, as Jean Seznec has shown, with details drawn syncretically from Oriental and Celtic mythology. In this context Hercules appears chiefly as "Hercules Gallicus," the symbolic figure of eloquence first recorded in Lucian and widely popular in Renaissance France, but there are also the familiar images of Hercules as the virtuous active hero surmounting the forces of evil in his numerous labors. Though Cartari is aware of Hercules the glutton and Hercules the lecher, his account
of the hero is ultimately as positive in direction as is Giraldi's *De Deis Gentium*, to whom Cartari acknowledges indebtedness. After noting numerous statues that he has seen of Hercules' labors, Cartari concludes in the widely-known French translation of Antoine du Verdier:

Mais d'autant qu'il n'y a monstres plus espouuants, n'y plus cruels tirans contre les hommes, que sont les vices de l'ame, aucuns ont voulu dire, que la force d'Hercule fut la force de l'esprit, & non du corps: avec laquelle il surmonte tout appetit desordonné, qui est rebelle à la raison.

The manuals of the mythographers Giraldi and Cartari are both dedicated to members of the Este family, but there are also scattered Herculean references applicable to the Gonzago family of Mantua. Cardinal Ercole Gonzago, presider over the Council of Trent, is seen in a poem by Tasso to be rising from a funeral pyre to a heavenly apotheosis; in the Gonzago Palazzo del Te Frederick Hartt has noticed the relevance of the six Herculean labors portrayed in the Sala dei Cavalli.

Indeed, both the popularity of the name Hercules with its numerous symbolic associations and the efforts of writers and artists to capitalize upon this interest appear widespread throughout the Cinquecento. At the turn of the century, in a 1497 grammar of Elio Donato's, there appears a painted Hercules' choice that is meant to apply to the industrious efforts of its owner, the young prince Ercole, Conte di Pavia. Later in the century Pope Clement VII is seen in prayer choosing between *Virtus* and *Voluptas* on the frontispiece to Sigismondo Fanti's *Triomphe di Fortuna* (1527);
the association of Clement with Hercules was to be recalled later in Giraldi's *De Deis Gentium*, as we have already seen. Echoes of this type of symbolic Hercules linkage are perhaps evident in Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* (1528), in which the Court of Urbino is considered superior to other courts as is Hercules' size greater than an ordinary man's, by Pythagorean calculations. 42

The reappearance of overt allegorizing in the Cinquecento, seen in so many facets of literature and art, is perhaps most striking when we place in chronological order the three major mythographical manuals of the century and Cinthio's unfinished epic: Within nine years there are available Giraldi's *De Deis Gentium* (1548), Natale Conti's *Mythologiae* (1551), Cartari's *Le Imagini . . . Dei . . . Antichi* (1556), and Giraldi Cinthio's *Erocle* (1557).

Conti's *Mythologiae*, the remaining mythographical manual to be touched on, does not differ intrinsically from its fellows, though its emphasis is not on names nor on iconography, but rather on the symbolic interpretations of the myths themselves. 43 Hercules is by now a familiar figure to us in this context, and I shall not attempt to elaborate upon the interpretations given to each labor, but it is interesting to note in passing that Conti traces the mythological gods from Egypt, thence to Persia and Greece, and on to Rome and the inhabited Western world. His awareness of these distant and distinct sources for mythological materials and his syncretic and indiscriminate grouping together of
these sources are traits characteristic of all three of the manuals: In critical acumen or insistence on first-hand observation of art they have not progressed far beyond Boccaccio two centuries before.\textsuperscript{44} Nevertheless these manuals, and the allegorical interpretations they include, become widely influential in the Renaissance in Northern Europe. The climate of the times has changed, religious controversy has encouraged a reassertion of overt allegory, and literature must be defended against its critical zealots.

The Cinquecento not only brings about a return to explicit allegory, but there is also a gradual movement toward typological defenses. Pagan myth must be able to be seen in terms of moral allegory, and more especially in terms of typological symbolism. Sixteenth-century Italian literature points the direction in which the Christian epics of Spenser and Milton will root and flourish—the progressive movement toward an emphasis upon Divine history and the Christian hero. Professor Merritt Hughes remarked years ago on the Renaissance Christianization of the Aristotelian magnanimous hero; this trend can be seen in Alessandro Piccolomini's \textit{Della Institutione Morale}, where Hercules is seen as demi-god and master over his passions who transcends his body in an apotheosis of spiritual fulfillment.\textsuperscript{45} It will be seen even more vividly in Renaissance France.

Concomitant with the renewed interest in allegorical and typological correspondences, however, there appears the rebuttal of the disenchanted and the satirists, latent in any age but
especially denigrating under the aegis of Catholic or Protestant reform. Torquato Tasso, whose *Gerusalemme Liberata* is one of the high points of Counter-Reformation art, pointedly writes of a Christian Crusade, not of the voyage of the Argonauts. The only extensive appearance of Hercules is in the Palace of Armida, a companion structure to Spenser's Bower of Bliss, as noted in Fairfax's English translation:

Alcides there sate telling Tales, and spun
Among the feeble Troops of Damsels milde,
He that the fiery Gates of Hell had won,
And Heav'n up-held; false Love stood by and smilde:
Arm'd with his Club fair Idolee forth run,
His Club with Blood of Monsters foul defilde,
And on her Back his Lions Skin had she,
Too rough a Bark for such a tender Tree. 46

Tasso's emphasis on the holy epic and his satiric presentation of pagan myth are presages of the future fate of classical mythology in seventeenth century literature and art. The enthusiastic vigor of the High Renaissance has been dissipated and distorted within the steely grip of the Counter-Reformation; Hercules of Michelangelo's "David" has been fig-leaved and robed in allegorical piety. The three mythographical manuals of Giraldi, Conti, and Cartari are widely popular in the last half of the Cinquecento, spreading their hybrid mythological figures and allegorical interpretations throughout Italy and the rest of Europe. 47

By the time of the late Cinquecento we can see ourselves already distant from the Italian High Renaissance; the situation is somewhat analogous in the late sixteenth
century France of St. Francis of Sales and Guillaume Salluste du Bartas. But antecedent to the pious close of the sixteenth century in France appear the Renaissance figures of Du Bellay and Ronsard, foreshadowed in turn by Erasmus and Rabelais. We leave the austerity of the Italian Cinquecento only to the coruscation of Renaissance France.

2

In sixteenth century France we find that contemporary attitudes toward the Hercules myth are similar in part to those of the Italian Renaissance, though, as Helmut Hatzfeld has noted, "France in the short space of a century ran through as many humanisms as Italy had done in three centuries." Whereas fifteenth century France still retained much of its medieval character, by the turn of the century Erasmus and then Rabelais had begun their humanistic and ironic probings into the medieval world-view; by mid-century we are in the Renaissance world of Du Bellay and Ronsard.

Desiderius Erasmus is a complex figure, as are others of the first decades of the century such as Marguerite of Navarre or Rabelais, but perhaps they can be called "Christian humanists" in much the same spirit as Petrarch or Boccaccio—grounded in medieval Christian faith and symbolism and yet at the same time involved in philological criticism and the aspirations of man's secular world. These Christian humanists ambivalently stand as transition figures between
the Middle Ages and the Renaissance in much the same position as the fifteenth century figures Laurent de Premierfait or Raoul Le Fèvre: Erasmus, for example, who thought of himself as a Hercules Gallicus who would establish reason through his philological efforts and rhetorical eloquence, felt constrained to justify this association with a pagan hero by stressing the allegorical interpretations of classical myth. In the *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* (1501) Erasmus strongly defends the allegorical approach to literature, both sacred and pagan, even stating that "peraduenture a poetes fable in the allegory shall be redde with somewhat more frute than a narracyon of holy bookes of thou rest in ÿ rynde or ytter parte." In this respect "the labours of Hercules putteth the in remembraunce that heuen must be obtayned with honest labours and enforcementes infatygable," as for example in the struggle against the Hydra of vanity or envy. As an authority for allegorical interpretations Erasmus cites Augustine's preference for Plato and Pythagoras, "not only bycause they haue many sentences moche agreable to our relygyon but also bycause the very maner of open and clere speeche whiche they vse (as I haue sayde before) full of allegoryes draweth very nygh to ÿ style of holy scripture." Scriptural style, Erasmus notes further, is basically allegorical "in a maner lyke to Sileni of Alcibiades vnder a rude and folysshe couering in- clude pure diuyne and godly things."

At the same time, however, Erasmus could attack the
extremes of allegorical interpretation, especially of classical myth. Though he urges the reading and allegorizing of Homer and Virgil, "for the poetes which wryte vnclenly I wolde counseyle the not ones to touche them."55 He is opposed to superstitious worship of saints, which he compares to giving tithes to Hercules images so that one might become rich,56 and in The Praise of Folly the lascivious exploits of the pagan gods are burlesqued and mocked to such an extent that the adaptability of any allegorical method is implicitly denied.57

We find a parallel situation in the Prologue to Rabelais' Gargantua (1534): On one hand Rabelais, referring like Erasmus to the Sileni of Plato's Symposium, defends the allegorical nature of his work whose "Pythagorical symbols" will reveal "the most glorious doctrines and dreadful mysteries, as well in what concerneth our religion, as matters of the public state and life economical."58 On the other hand, in the same Prologue, Rabelais attacks the allegorical interpreters of Homer and of Ovid's Metamorphoses, such as Bersuire, who is denounced as a "gulligut friar, and true bacon-picker."59 In short, both Erasmus and the later Rabelais are aware of and accept the medieval allegorical tradition, though they both ridicule its extremes. These early sixteenth century humanists could emphasize medieval allegory, and yet at the same time be critical and skeptical humanists, viewing man's follies with ironic, urbane amusement.

The allegorical tradition was alive in early sixteenth
century France; even in the 1545 French translation of Boccaccio's De Mulieribus, as we have already noted, Hercules is presented in more virtuous and positive symbolic tones. Similarly there are traces of the typological tradition in such early figures as Marguerite of Navarre or Guillaume Budé: In Budé's De asse (1515), Hercules and his club are compared to Christ and the cross. Perhaps the influence of the Quattrocento Neo-Platonists can be glimpsed in these early appearances of Hercules; Pico della Mirandola, we recall, traveled to Paris in 1485 for a series of lectures at the Sorbonne.

The mid-century French writers, however, go beyond their Christian humanist predecessors. The transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance has been made—pagan myth, which for the earlier humanists was allowable because of its allegorical and typological meanings, now is accepted in a neo-pagan spirit of vitalism and harmonious beauty, much as in Italy of the Quattrocento. Nevertheless, especially as regards the figure of Hercules, the influence of the Reformation on the French Renaissance distinguishes its treatment of myth from that of Italy a century before. Whereas fifteenth-century Italy could present the unabashed Herculean "David" of Michelangelo or the vibrant Hercules paintings of Pollaiuolo, sixteenth-century France felt the need for a continued allegorical or typological defense of pagan myth against its Reformation critics. Only as an euhemeristic hero, typologically adumbrating Christ, could Hercules be accepted by the reformer
Zwingli, who writes to Francis I in 1531, "Shouldst thou follow in the footsteps of David, thou wilt one day see God Himself; and near to Him thou mayest hope to see Adam, Abel, Enoch, Paul, Hercules, Theseus, Socrates. . . ." Two years later, Jean de Langeac, Bishop of Limoges, has erected in his Cathedral a rood-screen ornamented with the labors of Hercules as prefiguring those of Christ. 64 This typological approach to Hercules is more striking in the works of the Pléiade poets Du Bellay and Ronsard, but the allegorical justifications for the Hercules myth are strongly evident under the oft-repeated national motif of Hercules Gallicus. Indeed, as in the Quattrocento Renaissance, typological symbolism and allegorical interpretation fuse together into archetypal significance, though the Christian correspondences of the Hercules myth must be made more defensively explicit. To place the Herculean poems of Du Bellay and Ronsard in their proper context we must first turn briefly to trace the concept of Hercules Gallicus and the appearance of this figure in France.

As Professor Marcel Simon has pointed out, as early as the first century A.D. Cornutus and Seneca had linked Hermes and Hercules together as twin Logoi, Hermes representing the Logos that gives reason and knowledge and Hercules signifying the Logos of force and vigor, the organ of Creative Fire. 65 In the following century Lucian was to fuse these two Logoi into the composite figure of Hermes-Hercules, or, since Lucian had heard of this figure from the Gauls, the "Gallic Hercules." 66 To Lucian the portrait of the Gallic
Hercules seemed strange indeed:

To their notion, he is extremely old, bald-headed, except for a few lingering hairs which are quite gray, his skin is wrinkled, and he is burned as black as can be, like an old sea-dog. . . . That old Heracles of theirs drags after him a great crowd of men who are all tethered by the ears! His leashes are delicate chains fashioned of gold and amber, . . . /and the men/ follow cheerfully and joyously, applauding their leader and all pressing him close and keeping the leashes slack. . . . Since the painter had no place to which he could attach the ends of the chains, as the god’s right hand already held the club and his left the bow, he pierced the tip of his tongue and represented him drawing the men by that means! (Heracles, Chaps. 1-3).

In order to clear up Lucian’s bewilderment, a nearby Gaul or Celt must then explain the riddle of the picture to the Greek stranger:

We Celts do not agree with you Greeks in thinking that Hermes is Eloquence: we identify Heracles with it, because he is far more powerful than Hermes. And don’t be surprised that he is represented as an old man, for eloquence alone is wont to show its full vigour in old age. . . . /And/ if old Heracles here drags men after him who are tethered by the ears to his tongue, don’t be surprised at that, either: you know the kinship between ear and tongue. . . . In general, we consider that the real Heracles was a wise man who achieved everything by eloquence and applied persuasion as his principal force. His arrows represent words, I suppose, keen, sure and swift, which make their wounds in souls. (Heracles, Chaps. 4-6).

Lucian’s Greek text was unknown to the European Middle Ages, but in 1496 the complete Greek edition of Lucian appeared in France; by 1506 Erasmus, in collaboration with Sir Thomas More, had translated the text of Heracles into Latin prose.67 The figure of the Gallic Hercules soon became a symbol of eloquence and rhetorical persuasion for the sixteenth-century humanists—contemporary artists and
writers of emblem and iconographic handbooks, including Cartari, made the image of Hercules Gallicus known throughout sixteenth century Europe. Professor Edgar Wind has acutely observed that the figure of Hercules Gallicus began in the early sixteenth century to supersede Orpheus as the symbol of humanist aspirations: "The appeal of Orpheus, the lyrical poet, yielded before that of Hercules Gallicus, the god of forensic eloquence. The advance from the inspired bard to the forceful orator foreshadows the change from the mystical poetry of Politian and Pico to the didactic pragmatism of Erasmus." Erasmus, in fact, propagates the Hercules myth, and especially the figure of Hercules Gallicus, with persistent frequency. We have already noted Erasmus' allegorical approach to the myth, tempered somewhat by his skeptical refusal to go to interpretative extremes. His skepticism does not inhibit Erasmus, however, from seeing himself as an eloquent and industrious Hercules, persuading men through his philological labors. The association appears as early as 1501 in a letter to his patron Anne of Borssele, where Erasmus compares himself to Hercules in his suffering to write worthy of her honor; later the same year in the Enchiridion Erasmus criticizes modern clerics for their lack of eloquence and insists on the importance of Herculean "continuall & importunate labour" against the Hydra of vanity. Following his 1506 translation of Lucian Erasmus is even more explicit. Holbein's portrait of 1523 reveals "The Labors of
Hercules" inscribed in Greek on Erasmus' book,\textsuperscript{72} in An Exhortation to the Diligent Studye of Scripture, translated into English and printed in Antwerp in 1529, the author in his introduction (1r-v) desires to persuade like Mercury, Orpheus, or Hercules Gallicus, "as the frenshmen applye to Hercules Ogmius fainige that he leadeth aboute all men with hys godly eloquence as it were with certen smale chaynes which are tied vnto his tonge and runne thorow every mannes eares."\textsuperscript{73} Other humanists recognized Erasmus as a Hercules Gallicus figure: Dürrer's satiric drawings of the image, as Professor Wind has iconographically revealed, are attacks on Erasmus' verbal diffidence and non-aggressiveness that were answered in turn by the woodcut of Luther as \textit{Hercules Germanicus}, an arrogant and callous destroyer of all humanistic refinement and learning.\textsuperscript{74}

Hercules Gallicus was thus well-known in the sixteenth century as a symbol of verbal eloquence. But in sixteenth century France Hercules had already been associated with the founding of Gaul: The legend that the Libyan Hercules had a son Galateus by Galatea, the daughter of King Celte of Gaul, and thence became the founder of the Gallic dynasty was transmitted to the sixteenth century in the spurious Berosus chronicle (1498) of Annius of Viterbo and was widely current throughout the period. Jean Lemaire de Belges, taking from Berosus and also calling upon earlier traditional accounts noted in De Premierfait and Le Fèvre, discussed the role of Hercules in the Trojan origin of the Franks at length in his
Illustrations de Gaule et singularités de Troie (1509-13). Guillaume Du Bellay and Jean Cartigney followed Lemaire and the Berosus chronicle in speaking of this "Hercule gaulois," and we find Guillaume Postel defending the Berosus commentaries at great length in the 1550's. Postel's particular attraction to the spurious chronicle of "Berosus the Chaldean" is understandable, for Postel as a noted French cabalist could read mystical overtones in the Berosus account that presented Hercules as a Libyan euhemeristic hero, son of the Egyptian king Osiris; the Egyptian Hercules was a popular figure in light of the contemporary interest in the Hieroglyphica and the esoteric syncretism of the Neo-Platonists and mythographers. Indeed the Libyan Hercules, as both Annius and Lemaire presented him, was a founder of nations by devious and supernatural means: Hercules' union with the half woman and half serpent Araxa the Younger produced a son Tuscus, eventually to become king of Italy and progenitor of Dardanus, founder of the Trojan line. Other accounts connected Hercules with the founding of the Gallic city Alexia, and even of Paris itself. Though later historians such as Estienne Pasquier in Les Recherches de la France, Book I (1560), and Claude Fauchet in Antiquités gauloises et françaises rejected such legends, we find Hercules glorified as a national hero as late as the reign of Louis XIV in the Origine des Français et de leur empire (1676) of Pierre Audigier.

As might be expected, these dynastic associations led
French rulers to consider themselves as reincarnated Hercules heroes, and poets and artists were quick to praise their sovereigns in such flattering terms. Thus Jean Bouchet could praise Francis I by recalling his lineage with the Libyan Hercules. Du Bartas in his Sonnets upon the (late) miraculous Peace in Fraunce speaks of Henry IV as:

0 modern Hercules (thy Countries Father)  
Hope not of vs thy just-deserved meed:  
Earth is too-base, in Heav'n expect it rather.

Similarly the Jesuits of Avignon in 1600 refer to Henry of Navarre as the reborn Hercule Gaulois, noble heir of the illustrious founder of France. Artists also praised the French monarchs through such flattery: The sculptures of Girardon and Coysevox, for example, presented Hercules as a heroic predecessor and divine servitor of Louis XIV.

In short, the Gallic Hercules figure in sixteenth century France should be interpreted within two traditional contexts: as Hercules Gallicus, the symbol of verbal eloquence, or as Hercules Gaulois, the symbol of national dynastic pride. (Though the distinction will become tenuous in our Pléiade poets, we can for convenience specify the different traditions of the Gallic Hercules hereafter by this distinction in spelling.) Moreover, the medieval interpretations of Hercules were still called upon, especially by French defenders of pagan myth against their Huguenot critics: The typological and allegorical Hercules is everpresent among the poets of the Pléiade. With Du Bellay
and Ronsard, however, there is a Renaissance merging of these various traditional interpretations of Hercules that associates the work of these French poets with their past Neo-Platonic counterparts in Italy and points toward the future of Spenser's England.

The fusion of traditions is seen first in Geoffrey Tory's *Champ Fleury* (1529), in which Tory points to the image of Hercules Gallicus as justification for his use of French instead of Latin; for if Lucian's Gallic figure is a symbol of linguistic eloquence, then French must be the chosen language of persuasion. This patriotic association of Hercules Gallicus with the language of France reappears more fervently in Joachim Du Bellay's later *La Deffence et Illustration de la Langue Françoys* (1549): Du Bellay, after a stirring defense of the French vernacular as opposed to the slavish use of Greek and Latin, concludes:

> Nous auzons echappé du millieu des Grecz, & par les Scadrons Romains penetrated iusques au Seing de la tant desiree France. . . . Vous souviennes de votre ancienne Marseille, secondes Athenes: & de votre Hercule Gallique, tirant les Peuples apres luy par leurs Oreilles auqueues vne Chesne attachée a sa Langue.

Though on one hand the legends of the Herculean and the Trojan origins of the Franks might be discounted by some sixteenth century historians, on the other hand the national associations of Hercules Gallicus with the vernacular reaffirmed Hercules in patriotic overtones similar to those denied him in the historical context. Thus, for example,
Estienne Pasquier, who condemned the Trojan legends in Book I of *Les Recherches de la France*, later in Book IX of the same work speaks of numerous Hercules Gallicus statues seen in the streets of Gaul; in a letter of 1552 to Adrien Turnèbe, professor of Greek at the Sorbonne, Pasquier defends the use of the vernacular in the following terms:

"Et neantmoins si vous puis-je dire, que jamais nostre France, anciennement appelée Gaule, ne fut denuee de son eloquence: & celebroient nos anciens aussi bien leur Hercule Gaulois, pour ce subjet, comme les Grecs & Romains, leur Mercure." 87

In 1549 Du Bellay had spoken of Hercules Gallicus in *La Deffence*, but three years later the poet celebrates the mythological hero in Neo-Platonic terms, possibly taken from Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano*. In the tenth sonnet of the *XIII Sonnetz de L'Honneste Amour* (1552) the poet's ascent to the highest level of Divine Love would end in a Hercules apotheosis:

```
Ja peu à peu moinesme' j'abandonne
Par cete ardeur, qui me faict sembler tel
Que se monstroit l'indompté filz d'Alcmène
Qui dedaignant nostre figure huméne,
Brula son corps, pour se rendre immortel.
```

Ronsard's Sonnet CXXXIX of *Les Amours*, also published in 1552, repeats the Neo-Platonic theme in more passionate terms:

```
Je veus brusler pour m'en voler aux cieux,
Tout l'imparfait de ceste escorce humaine,
```
M'esternissant, comme le filz d'Alcméne,  
Qui tout en feu s'assit entre les Dieux. . . .
O sainct brazier, ô feu chastement beau  
Las, brusle moy d'un si chaste flambeau
Qu'abandonant ma despouille cognue,  
Né, libre, & nud, je vole d'un plein sault,
Oultre le ciel, pour adorer là haut  
L'autre beaute dont la tienne est venue.89

The Neo-Platonic emphasis on Hercules' apotheosis in these love sonnets of 1552 is echoed in the later work of Du Bellay and Ronsard, but in a distinctively sixteenth century French fashion. Whereas the Christ-Hercules analogy was implicit in the writings of the Italians Pico, Leone, or Castiglione, it was never explicitly examined. In Ronsard's *Hercule Chrestien* (1555), however, the Catholic poet explores in detail the analogies between the pagan hero and Christ, based on the authority and precedent of medieval typology. The correspondences that the earlier Italians had only implicitly suggested are now considered necessary to be presented in graphic display--pagan myth must be typologically or allegorically defended against the severity of critical reformers, Protestant and Catholic alike.

But the Christian associations of Hercules were not the only defense of the Pléiade. In Du Bellay's later presentations of the myth Hercules appears as a virtuous hero linked with the dynastic ancestry of France and the persuasive powers of the French monarch--the traditions of Hercules Gaulois and Hercules Gallicus fuse into a great symbolic nexus of national power. In Sonnet CLXXII of
Les Regrets (1558) the poet thus addresses the son of
Henry II, husband of Mary Stuart and later to be Francis II:

Digne filz de Henry, nostre Hercule Gaulois,
Nostre second espoir, qui portes sus ta face
Retraicté au naturel la maternelle grace,
Et gravee en ton coeur la vertu de Vallois:
Cependant que le ciel, qui ja dessous tes loix
Trois peuples a soumis, armera ton audace
D'une plus grand' vigueur, suy ton pere à la trace,
Et apprens à donter l'Espagnol & l'Anglois.
Volcy de la vertu la penible montee,
Qui par le seul travail veult estre surmontee:
Voila de l'autre part le grand chemin battee,
Ou au sejour du vice ou monte sans eschelle.
Deça (Seigneur) deça, ou la vertu t'appelle,
Hercule se feit Dieu par le seule vertu.\textsuperscript{90}

In the same year Du Bellay published Le Premier Livre des
Antiquitez de Rome . . . plus un Songe ou Vision sur le
Mesme Subiect: the tenth sonnet of the Antiquitez and the
eighth and tenth sonnets of the Songe proclaim in chorus the
degeneration of the Roman state, seen as a Hydra "Foisonnant
en sept chefz de vices monstrueux" (Songe X, l. 12) and in
desperate need of a Hercules to end its civil strife.\textsuperscript{91}
Indeed, if we juxtapose these Hercules-Hydra sonnets with
the contemporary Hercules sonnet from Les Regrets, keeping
in mind Du Bellay's earlier praise of Hercules Gallicus as
a symbol for French eloquence and persuasion in La Deffence,
it may be conjectured that Du Bellay in these sonnets of
1558 is exhorting King Henry II to quell latent civil
disorder and political rivalries within his immediate court,
within France under the rise of the Huguenots, and even beyond
national borders to Rome and its papal corruption.\textsuperscript{92} Du
Belay's two other accounts of Hercules, adaptations from Book IX of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, deal with Hercules' efforts against the three-headed Achelous and can also be seen in this political context: In the earlier *Description de la Corne d'Abondance* (1550) Du Bellay merely alludes briefly to the Hercules-Achelous struggle, whereas *Le Combat d'Hercule et d'Achelous*, another Herculean poem of 1558, presents the battle against the three-headed monster in an extensive poem of two hundred lines. The "trois formes d'Achelous" in the 1558 poem are analogous to the "Trois peuples a soubmis" (the Scotch, English, and French, united through the dauphin's marriage to Mary Stuart) of Sonnet CLXXII of *Les Regrets*.

The political, patriotic character of Du Bellay's Herculean poems, which at the same time both celebrate the glorious ancestry of the monarchy and yet admonish the King as Hercules Gaulois to beware of the Hydra of civil insurrection, are centered about the year 1558. Within a year later Henry II had died, the Duke of Guise had assumed authority over the affairs of Francis II, and Huguenot opposition had begun in earnest. By early 1560, when the Huguenot Conspiracy of Ambroise presented open opposition to the monarchy, Du Bellay was dead. The poet's concern with Hercules, as we retrace his career, appears in a discernible chronological pattern: First there is an emphasis on the Hercules Gallicus as a symbol of national eloquence; then reference to the Neo-Platonic apotheosis of Hercules, an indication of Italian
influence on the poet; and finally a number of hortatory appeals to the King seen both as the eloquent Herculean persuader and as the virtuous French descendant of the Greek hero. A somewhat similar pattern of Herculean references appears in the works of Ronsard; if the political character of Du Bellay's Antiquitez and Songe seems tenuous, the corroborative evidence of Ronsard's similar later approach to the Hercules myth is overwhelmingly clear.

References to Hercules in Ronsard's poetry of the 1550's are not predominantly nationalistic in tone, though there are scattered political allusions present. In Les Amours of 1552, which contains Ronsard's previously mentioned Neo-Platonic Sonnet CXXXIX, there are two sonnets (CLXXII and CLXXIII) eulogizing the birth in 1551 of Henry, the Duke of Beaumont, the latter sonnet of which compares the new born Henry to young Hercules, destined to conquer vice and be glorified in the heavens. As Professor Laumonier has noted, the name of the reigning monarch was also Henry, and contemporary writers such as Estienne Pasquier and later editors of Ronsard confused this birth of the infant duke with the 1553 birth of Henry of Navarre, the later Henry IV. Though Ronsard may not have meant to refer to Henry II or to Henry of Navarre in these sonnets, his sixteenth-century public did not hesitate to link Hercules here with the king.

In other contemporary poems such as the Elegie à M.A. de Muret (1553) and a short inscription to the Duke of
Savoy (1559) Ronsard ignores the royal connotations of the Hercules myth, though he was well aware of the legends of the Trojan origin of Gaul with which the Hercules Gaulois was associated. As early as 1550 in his Ode de la Paix Ronsard had referred to these Trojan legends, promulgated by Jean Lemaire's Illustrations de Gaule, and in his unfinished epic La Franciade (begun c. 1555) the story of Francion, son of Hector, is the center of the narrative. In this context we can place the allusions to Hercules in Ronsard's Les Bacchanales, ou le Voyage d'Hercueil (1552) and La Harangue du Duc de Guise (1553). The Duke's speech in the latter poem, for example, is thus introduced and begun:

     Après qu'il eut de fer tout de cors revêtu,  
     Branlant la pique au poin, aguisa la vertu  
     De ses nobles Souldars, & d'un coeur magnanime  
     Par ces vers Tyrteans au combat les anime.  
     Sus, courage Souldars, sus, sus, montrés vous or'  
     De la race d'Hercule, & de celle d'Hector:  
     Hercule, après avoir l'Espagne surmontée  
     Vint en Gaule épouser la Roine Galatée,  
     Dont vous estes issu, puis le Troien Francus  
     Seul heritier d'Hector, quitant les murs vaincus  
     D'Ilion, vint en France, & la race Troienne  
     Méla cent ans après avec l'Herculienne. (ll. 109-20)

The reference in this poem to Hercules Gaulois introduces patriotic associations much as Du Bellay had cited Hercules Gallicus in La Deffence. Of more prominent display in the 1550's, however, is Ronsard's Hercule Chrestien (1555), a poem of 296 lines that culminates the medieval traditions of symbolic typology in an ambitious series of analogues between Christ and his pagan predecessor Hercules. The poem, included in Les Hymnes of 1555, is addressed to Cardinal Odet
of Chastillon and is marked by Ronsard's religious sincerity.
Following the example of Du Bellay, who in La Lyre Christienne
(1552) had rejected his early interest in pagan themes,
Ronsard begins with a statement of religious purpose:

Le payen sonne une chanson payenne,
Et le chrestien une chanson chrestienne:
Le vers payen est digne des payens,
Mais le chrestien est digne des christiens:
Donques, de Christ le nom tressainct & digne
Commencera & finera mon Hymne,
Car c'est le Dieu qui m'a donne l'esprit
Pour celebrer son nom par mon escrit:
Or' puisse donc cette Lyre d'yvoire
Tousjours chanter sa louenge & sa gloire:
Telle qu'elle est, o Seigneur, désormais
Je la consacre à tes piedz pour jamais.
(11. 7-18)163

Then follows a fervid personal acknowledgment of God's benefits bestowed on mankind both by the Creation (11. 19-44) and by the Incarnation (11. 45-8), as foreshadowed by those Jewish prophets and pagan Sibyls who prophesied the coming of Christ (11. 49-84). The pagans, however, would not heed the Sibyls and interpreted their prophecies in relation to their own false gods:

A leurs faux Dieux, contre toute raison,
Attribuant maintenant à Jason,
Et maintenant à un Hercule estrange,
Ce qui estoit de propre à ta louenge. (11. 89-92)

Ronsard's attack on the false gods of paganism, as contrasted to the one true Christian God, continues for fifty-three lines (11. 92-144). The fallacy of the pagan worshippers, he then concludes, was in not recognizing that these pagan gods,
like the Jewish prophets and the sibylline oracles, were prefiguring the Christian revelation; indeed, that the deeds attributed to a pagan god such as Hercules were actually symbolic representations of the deeds of Christ. A true believer, Ronsard charges, would recognize these affinities:

Mais où est l'oeil, tant soit-il avenglé,  
Où est l'esprit, tant soit-il dereglé,  
S'il veut un peu mes paroles comprendre,  
Que par raison je ne luy face entendre  
Que la plus-part des choses qu'on escrit  
D'Hercule, est due à un seul Jesuschrist?  
(11. 145-50)

The rest of Hercule Chrestien reviews the principal episodes of the Hercules myth, interpreting them in terms of Christ's career (11. 151-284), and ends with a humble dedication of "Ce vers chrestien" to Cardinal Odet (11. 285-96). As illustrations of Ronsard's analogies, Hercules' victories over those "monstres infectz" such as the Hydra, the Nemean lion, and Geryon are to be seen as:

... le Vice, & les Pechez enormes  
Que Jesuschrist, par le celeste effort  
De sa grand' Croix, mist tous d'un coup à-mort  
(11. 180-2)

whereas the apotheosis of Hercules is explicitly related to the Crucifixion:

Hé qu'est-ce apres d'Hercule qui alla  
Sur le mont d' OEthe, & par feu s'immola  
A Jupiter? si-non Christ à son Pere,  
Qui s'immola sur le Mont de Calveré. (11. 253-6)
Ronsard's *Hercule Chrestien*, as I have attempted to point out here, is a religious poem, sincere in purpose and firmly rooted within the medieval typological tradition. Professor Marcel Simon, who has explored this tradition in detail, places Ronsard's poem as the culminating peak within the movement from allegorical and euhemeristic explanations of Hercules to a typological interpretation of the myth.\(^{104}\) Earlier sixteenth-century French writers such as Guillaume Budé and Marguerite of Navarre had presented typological interpretations of pagan myth, and Nicolas Denisot, in his *Cantiques du premier advenement de Jesus-Christ* (1553), opposed pagan polytheism and supported Christian exegesis of myth in terms closely similar to Ronsard's:

... chaque fois que l'une des fables anciennes fournit quelque symbole ou quelque analogie avec un dogme chrétien, il est louable pour le croyant de recueillir ces pressentiments lointains du christianisme. ... Ainsi Hercule qui étouffe les serpents au berceau est une figure poétique de Jésus enfant.\(^{105}\)

Ronsard's *Hercule Chrestien* and Denisot's statement seem, at first glance, to be surviving remnants of a medieval typological tradition reintroduced into the tumultuous world of sixteenth century France. Yet, though typology provides a theoretical framework for Ronsard's poem, the Hercules-Christ analogies have here reached beyond mere typological fulfillment to a symbolic equivalence of the Christian and the classical heroes. Ronsard not only suggests that the historical Hercules is a prophetic foreshadowing of Christ,
but he insists that the symbolic Hercules is the Christ. The poet's numerous parallels between the pagan hero and Christ approach blasphemy in their explicitness and detail, so much so that despite Ronsard's avowed sincerity and religious purpose the poem has suffered attacks of righteous indignation from Huguenot circles in the 1560's to the most recent critics of our own day.¹⁰⁶

Why did Ronsard extend his parallels so far? Before we condemn the poet, we must take into account both his Neo-Platonic background and the sixteenth century French conditions into which he found himself placed. The medieval heritage of mythological exposition was not only euhemeristic and typological, but also, as in the commentaries on Ovid, allegorical on various levels of meaning. Thus the medieval analogical meanings applied to the Hercules legends provided an authoritative precedent for Ronsard's treatment of the myth. Furthermore, Ronsard's own Neo-Platonism, already noted in his Amours of 1552, made available to the poet a mystical tradition and an emphasis on Hercules' apotheosis that could become directly applicable to the later Christianizing of the myth. Finally, the charged atmosphere of Reformation France, soon to burst forth in the Wars of Religion of the sixties and seventies, would logically lead Ronsard to religious apologetics and Christian justifications for his love of the pagan Muses.

Ronsard's Neo-Platonism is evident not only in his love sonnets but also in his approach to pagan myth. Renaissance
interest in the *prisca theologia*, or the syncretic listing of ancient thinkers, all of whom were considered to have taught allegorically the same religious truths, derived chiefly from Ficino's translations of the Orphic Hymns. From Ficino and his circle this type of religious allegorical syncretism, seen also in the interest aroused by the Hermetic writings and by the *Hieroglyphica* of Horapollo, spread eventually to France. Pico had lectured in Paris in 1485–6, and already at the beginning of the sixteenth century such figures as Marguerite of Navarre and Lefèvre d'Etaples had been strongly influenced by Florentine Neo-Platonism. We have already mentioned the concern of both Erasmus and Rabelais with the allegorical nature of scriptural and poetic texts—by mid-century the allegorical approach to pagan mythology, supported by the Platonic emphasis on fable as a hidden source of religious truths, had reached the Pléiade via such poets as Dorat and Pontus de Tyard. In addition, Ronsard may have known the mid-century mythographical treatises of Giraldi Cartari, and especially Conti, whose allegorical approach to the myths has already been noted. Ronsard's acknowledgment of and agreement with the allegorical view of poetic myth is clearly stated in his *Abbregé de l'Art Poétique François* (1565), addressed to the historian and poet Alphonse Delbene:

> Sur toutes choses tu auras les Muses en reverence, voire en singuliere veneration, & ne les feras jamais feruir à chose deshonnesté, à risées, à libelles injurieux, mais les tiendras chères & sacrées, comme les filles de Jupiter, c'est à dire de Dieu, qui de sa saincte grace a premierement par elles fait connoistre aux peuples ignorans les excellesses de sa maiesté.
Car la Poesie n' estoit au premier age qu' vn Theologie allegorique, pour faire entrer au cerveau des hommes grossiers par fables plaisantes & colorées les secrets qu' ils ne pouuoient comprendre, quand trop ouuertement ou descouuoiront la verité. Eumolpe Cecropien, Line maistre d' Hercule, Orphée, Homere, Hesiode inuenterent vn si excellent mestier. Pour ceste cause sont appellez Poetes diuins, non tant pour leur diuin esprit qui les rendoit sur tous admirables, que pour la conversation que ilz auoyent aucques les Oracles, Prophetes, Deuins, Sybilles, Interpretes de songes. . .: car les Oracles disoient en peu de mots, ces gentilz personnages l'amplioiuent, coloroiuent & augmentoient, estans vers le peuple ce que les Sybilles & Deuins estoient eu leur endroit.\textsuperscript{110}

Ronsard's defense of poetic fable as allegorical theology recalls Boccaccio's similar emphasis in \textit{De Genealogia Deorum} on the allegorical nature of poetry under whose superficial fables hidden mysteries are concealed. But whereas the humanists Boccaccio and Salutati were concerned as much with the moral as with the anagogical interpretations of poetry and myth, the Florentine Neo-Platonists and their followers in the Pléiade attended primarily to the occult, theological meanings to be derived from pagan fables. Under the disparate influence of Neo-Platonic religious syncretism and Reformation attacks upon aesthetic humanism, a Catholic poet such as Ronsard returns with a vengeance to the theological interpretations of poetry as provided for him in the medieval and allegorical traditions. In this context the hymn to \textit{Hercule Christien} is not only a Christian poem but is even a religious apology. Ronsard's viewpoint toward poetic myth as allegorical theology, we might add, remained consistent throughout his career: As early as 1552, in his \textit{Ode à Michel de l'Hospital}, Ronsard had spoken
of poetry in terms closely similar to those of the *Abbregé
de l'Art Poétique François*;\textsuperscript{111} in 1556 the poet begins his
*Hymne de l'Éternité* by referring to himself as an Orphic poet:

\begin{quote}
Remply d'un feu divin qui m'a l'ame eschauffée,
Je veux mieux que jamais, suivant les pas d'Orphée,
Decouvrir les secretz de Nature & des Cieux,
Recherchez d'un esprit qui n'est point ocieux . . \textsuperscript{112}
\end{quote}

and at his death in 1585 there remained, as one of Ronsard's
Christian adaptations of pagan hymns, an unfinished poem
entitled *l'Hercule Tu-lion*.

Despite Ronsard's conscious religious purpose and the
medieval traditions upon which he could call, however, the
*Hercule Chrestien* was judged heretical by the Huguenots. In
fact, as Professor Yates has suggested, the poem may have been
a planned Counter-Reformation riposte against the Protestant
rationalists through its emphasis on religious mysticism.\textsuperscript{114}
When we recall Ronsard's earlier references to the Hercules
Gaulois and then note the poet's return to these patriotic
associations in the reigns of Charles IX and Henry III, the
hymn to *Hercule Chrestien* may be seen to carry national con-
notations that would further irritate the Huguenot reformers.
Ronsard's poem, with its overt, unabashed analogies between
Christianity and paganism, appears more as a work of the
High Renaissance, comparable to Michelangelo's David, than
as a product of Reformation France, for the vitalistic spirit
of the Quattrocento, as it appears in Ronsard and his Pléiade
contemporaries, was antithetical to the Reformation spirit of the sixteenth century. At Ronsard's death in 1585, as Du Perron said at his funeral, "Now Pan is dead, and the oracles have ceased, and the Muses are abandoned." 115

After *Hercule Chrestien* Ronsard returns to the Hercules Gaulois figure that had already appeared in *La Harangue du Duc de Guise* and other poems centered about *La Franciade*. As with Du Bellay in his Herculean references of 1558, Ronsard's later Hercules allusions focus on the reigning monarch as the reincarnated Hercules who must now conquer the Hydra of Protestant insurrection. This hortatory theme first appears in a sonnet of 1563 included in the *Recueil des Nouvelles Poésies*: After praise of Hercules as a conqueror over vice in its myriad forms, the sonnet ends with a plea to the king, Charles IX:

*Sire, imitex les faits de ce grand Prince:*
*De toute erreur purgez vos tre province,*
*Par tels degrez il faut monter aux dieux.* 116

Two years later Charles is again associated with Hercules in a sonnet of light occasional verse, and in 1567 the poem *Au Roy Charles IX* extols the monarch at length as the reborn Hercules, using the analogical technique of the earlier *Hercule Chrestien*: Thus, for example, Hercules wore a lion skin as a sign of virtue, as Charles also is clothed in *vertù* and true nobility; Hercules' club is comparable to Charles' scepter of the just ruler; Hercules journeyed far to rout monsters, as Charles searches his kingdom for hidden enemies;
the magnanimous Hercules died to be immortalized, as
Charles will eventually rise to eternal glory. The section ends:

Et c'est pourquoy, Sire, le vous appelle
Nostre Herculan, qui sirez vne fois
Par vos vertus l'Hercule des François:
Car c'est à vous à qui le Ciel ordonne
Du monde entier le Sceptr et la Couronne.
Ainsi de vous l'a promis le destin
Inexorable, au fuseau aimantin,
Dur, acéré, d'invincible puissance:
C'est que seriez eu vostre adolescence,
Estant bien ieune orphelin demeuré,
Vn peu troublé; car rien n'est asseuré. (ll. 58-68)

In 1569 Hercules appears again as a symbol of French national power and the Catholic royalty: The long poem 
L'Hylas, an adaptation for the most part of Theocritus'
Idyll XIII, begins with praise of Hercules as the noble founder of Gaul and goes on to defend the hero against satiric slurs made about his reputed gluttony and lust:

Bref ils t'ont fait la cloaque d'erreur,
Tyran meschant, mais c'est bien le contraire.
Car tu appris aux vieux Francois a faire
Toutes vertus, & par ta douce voix
Les retirar comme feres des bois,
Pour habiter les chateaux & les villes
Mayr la faine, & les glands inutiles,
Semer le bled, cultiver les bons vins,
Honorar Dieu, reuerer ses voisins.

Later the same year the Catholic victory at Moncontour stimulated Ronsard to write L'Hydre Desfaict, followed by Les Elemens Ennemis de l'Hydre. In the former poem Henry, the Duke of Anjou and leader of the Catholic forces, is compared vigorously with Hercules in his fight against
the Hydra:

Or ce Henry a fait chose impossible,  
Tuant vn Hydra au combat invincible:  
Et seul de tous par armes a desfait  
Ainsi qu' Hercule vn Serpent contrefait  
A ux yeux ardents, à la gueule escumeuse,  
A la poitrine infecte & venimeuse...  
(11. 91-5)

The Huguenot forces are explicitly symbolized here as the Hydra and its serpentine destructiveness:

Ce ieune Dpy, ce Francois Herculin,  
Esleu de tous Capitaine publique,  
Coupa les chefs au serpent Hugnotique,  
Lequel auoit ce Royaume embrasé,  
Fouy les morts, sacrilege brisé  
Les Temples saintcs, honny nos bons Images,  
Et d'vn beau nom convrt ses brigandages.  
(11. 182-8)

The final Herculean poem of 1569, Les Elemens Ennemis de l'Hydre, similarly deals directly with the Hydra and its vicious Protestant nature.

Ronsard's later Herculean poems center about the nationalistic theme of Hercules Gaulois though without the antagonistic intensity of these poems of 1569. In 1571 there appear two short pieces in Les Mascarades: The first is a sixteen-line poem entitled "Povr le Roy habillé en Hercule, & Pluton trainé devant luy," which eulogizes Hercules (or Charles IX) as a model for the nobility of virtuous heroism, concluding:

Et si leur force au combat ne surmonte  
Tous assaillans, luy-mesme sa vertu
Veu employer pour mettre au combattu
Dessus le front la vergogne & la honte. 121

The second is a sonnet, "Sonet à quelqves Seigneurs qui
souprent chez luy," that speaks of Hercules' humble visit with
the Arcadian King Evander as an illustrative example of
virtuous conduct. In both of these poems Hercules
appears as an example of virtuous leadership, and in the
light of the previous poems we have examined it seems prob-
able that Ronsard is here too alluding to the Crown's policy
against the Huguenots. Ronsard was not an extremist; despite
his Catholic antipathy toward the Protestants, he did not
applaud the infamous Massacre of St. Bartholomew that
happened within a year following these 1571 poems.

The reign of Henry III (1574-89) brought forth two more
Herculean poems from Ronsard's pen. The king, who was sur-
named "Hercule défenseur des Muses" by Amadis Jamyn and other
poets circulating about the Court, wanted to stimulate
artistic activity within the kingdom; Ronsard's Pane-
gyrigve de la Renommee (1579) thus recognizes both Henry's
martial and rhetorical powers in the symbol of Hercules
Gallicus:

Nul Prince n'eut jamais l'ame si valeureuse,
Ny si doué du ciel d'vne memoire heureuse.
De miel eu son bercceau la Muse l'arrousa,
Pithon eu l'allaitant sa bouche composa
D'vne docte eloquence, afin de faire croire
Ce qu'il veut aux soudars pour gaigner la victoire,
Ou pour prescher son peuple, & par graues douceurs
Leur tirer de sa voix par l'oreille les coeurs
Comme son deuancier Hercule, dont la langue 124
Enchesnoit les Gaulois du fil de sa harengue.
Ronsard's final poem dealing with Hercules, *Les Parves*. A Lvy-Mesme, once more associates Henry III with the mythological hero and returns to the themes of martial valor and national sovereignty. As in the poet's earlier poems, the Herculean monarch must oppose his rebellious Huguenot subjects:

Enfant, en qui le ciel renuere son bon-heur,
Te remplissant autant de vertus & d'honneur
Qu' Hercule en fut rempli le jour de sa naissance,
Crois pour te faire vn iour l'ornement de la France.
Crois donc, & deuens grand, & d'vn bras enfantin
Riant dés le maillot embrasse ton destin.
Comme Alcide qui fut d'ynne force indomtee,
Souffrit mille travaux soubs son frere Eurystee,
Tu dois dessous le tien mille peines souffrir,
Et d'vn coeur genereux aux batailles t'offrir,
Et faire craqueter des ta jeunesse tendre
Le harnois sur ton dos pour son sceptre defendre.

(11. 7-18)\(^{125}\)

The eulogizing account of Henry's valor and vertù continues in this vein throughout the poem, ending with Henry's apotheosis:

Et boiras du Nectar à la table des Dieux,
Comme le preux Hercule, espousant la Jeunesse,
Et Castor & Pollux, Deitez que la Grece
Mist au ciel, & leur nom sema par l'Uniuers,
Tant vallent les vertus, les Muses & les vers.

(11. 67-72)

Ronsard's treatment of the Hercules myth in his poetry, as we have surveyed it here, reveals a chronological pattern similar in part to that of Du Bellay's: A beginning concern with the national connotations of the myth, whether of Hercules Gallicus or Hercules Gaulois; emphasis on Neo-Platonic and typological associations; and finally a return to the
nationalistic theme, with particular appeal to the reigning monarch as a defender against the Protestant menace. For the most part Hercules is a symbolic national hero. The political orientation of these Herculean poems of Ronsard, as with the earlier poems of Du Bellay, were also later to have a direct influence on Edmund Spenser, whose Faerie Queene reveals a pattern of references to Hercules closely analogous to the chronological pattern observed here.

The Renaissance view of Hercules, seen perhaps most strikingly in Ronsard's Hercule Chrestien, flourishes in sixteenth century France with particular emphasis on a symbolic realism supported by the dynastic associations of the myth. Little attention is paid to the satiric interpretations of the Hercules legends: Hercules is an archetypal symbol not of lust, but of virtuous heroism.

Yet both Du Bellay and Ronsard are strongly influenced by the prevailing atmosphere of religious reform—their approaches to pagan mythology incorporate explicit appeals to the accepted traditions of medieval typology and allegory, and the seeming naïveté or open harmony of the Quattrocento has been lost. The Italian Renaissance, as it moved Northward in the sixteenth century, faced a much more harsh and wintery climate than it had previously met on the sunny banks of the Arno and the Tiber. In this respect it is interesting to note the sixteenth century French reception of the Neo-Platonic priscachologial as accurately outlined for us by Professor Walker's studies: The liberal view of
religious syncretism seen in Ficino and Pico is tempered by the cautious and orthodox positions of Erasmus and Budé; by mid-century the *Prisca theologia* is being attacked by Protestant zealots as heretical and polytheistic.  

After Du Bellay, Ronsard, and the Pléiade, sixteenth century France passes into an era marked by what Helmut Hatzfeld has labeled "Devout Humanism," influenced strongly by the Spanish Counter-Reformation and typified by St. Francis of Sales and the "humanism of expediency" of Montaigne. We can note the shift from the mid-century Pléiade to the pietism of the last decades in numerous areas. The figure of the Gallic Hercules continues to thrive, both as a dynastic hero and as a symbol of rhetorical eloquence, but already there appear signs of doubt. Hercules, by the end of the sixteenth century in France, is being relegated to the same subservient and derogatory position that we have already seen hinted in the works of the Italian Tasso; by the time of Poussin the world of classical myth has become a detached Areadian fancy, irrelevant to the real world of action.

Hercules continues to be associated with the founding of Gaul, as we have seen in the works of Jean Lemaire de Belges and Audigier, though there are critical skeptics as early as Pasquier and Fauchet. The popular Berosus chronicle and the legends of the Trojan origin of France begin to come under attack by mid-century and necessitate defensive rebuttals by Guillaume Postel and others. And even these
defenders are not wholehearted supporters of the Hercules myth. Postel, for example, is only concerned with pagan myth as it is applicable to the legends pertaining to the diffusion of the children of Noah; Greek mythology as a whole he views as devilish corruptions of the religious cults of Noah. Related to this critical skepticism is the awareness of the classical world as within a defined separate moment in time, no more important nor progressive than any other historical period. The Renaissance cyclic view of history propounded by Postel in the 1550's, and later by Jean Bodin in his *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* (1566) and Louis Le Roy in *De la vicissitude ou variété des choses* (1575), then became increasingly challenged by the *contemptus mundi* emphasis on the world's progressive decay, implicit in Du Bartas and widely current in seventeenth century England. In fact, Postel's view of history is already both paradoxically progressive and retrogressive and has been defined in terms of "spiral" movement by a recent scholar.

In the last quarter of the century Du Bartas carries these trends further by both rejecting Berosus and restricting himself in his references to pagan myth: He would rather sing of Noah's than of Deucalion's flood, and though he has not succeeded in eliminating all classical references from his *Semaines*, others will come after him who will "wholly purge her, and will interdict . . . these monstrous iests." Du Bartas is lenient towards Hercules,
whom he associates in traditional fashion with the French
king, but even here a Christian hero is to be preferred
over the classical one. Hercules is analogous to the
Biblical David, as Michelangelo had recognized, yet the
Biblical hero was vastly superior:

The Twelve stout Labours of th' Amphitryonide
(Strongest of Men) are justly magnifi'd:
Yet, what were they but a rude Massacre
Of Birds and Beasts, and Monsters here and there?
Not Hoasts of Men and Armies overthrow'n;
But idle Conquests; Combats One to One:
Where boist'rous Limbs, and Sinews strongly knit,
Did much auxile with little ayde of Wit.

David, on the other hand, conquered whole tribes, so that:

... Alcides massie Club scarce raught 134
So many Blowes, as Dauid Battails fought.

The pietistic movement away from pagan myth in late
sixteenth century France can be glimpsed in yet another
context. Not only is Hercules' euhemeristic veracity
coming into question and his deeds being subordinated to
Christian themes, even though the national associations of
the myth were so strong throughout the century, but there
are also more frequent general condemnatory attacks against
the gods of paganism. Both Philippe de Mornay in De la
Verité de la Religion Christienne (1581) and La Boderie
in Les Hymnes Ecclesiastiques (1582), for example, are
severely critical of pagan mythology, seeing it either as
the fancies of a detached past or as the licentious actions
of sinful men. In the clashing world of Reformation
France classical myth remains suspect.

We have traversed the contours of Renaissance France and must turn to follow the Hercules myth upward into sixteenth and seventeenth century England. The echoes of Pico della Mirandola and Michelangelo, of Du Bellay and Ronsard, will reverberate in Tudor England in discordant notes and strange melodies, though much will be harmonized in the symphonic artistry of Edmund Spenser. After Spenser is another matter. But to guide us forward, we may perhaps glance back once more at the character of the French Renaissance, as exemplified in its approach to Hercules: an expansion of humanism, an outburst of Platonic poetry, and pervasive concern with the role and conduct of the virtuous ruler, but all of these aspects involved irrefutably with religious doctrine and controversy. The Hercules myth continues to remain of central interest for the humanists and patriotic writers of Cinquecento Italy and Renaissance France.
FOOTNOTES


2 The term "Counter-Renaissance" is used to denote the period between approximately 1520-1620, between High Renaissance and Baroque. I am indebted to the provocative article by Baird W. Whitlock, "The Counter-Renaissance," BHR, XX (1958), 434-49, and of course to Hiram Haydn, The Counter-Renaissance (New York, 1950).

3 Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, p. 173.

4 For the history of the statue see Charles de Tolnay, The Youth of Michelangelo (Princeton, 1943), pp. 93-5, 153-5. There are also three extent Michelangelo drawings now in the Windsor Royal Library of Hercules in his labours, against the Hydra, Antaeus, and the Nemean lion; see B. Berenson, The Drawings of the Florentine Painters (Chicago, 1938), I, 227; II, 216-7 (Cat. No. 1611); III, Pl. 689. Berenson further notes some Hercules-Antaeus sketches, I, 223-4; III, Pls. 678-82.

5 Ibid., p. 98. In the same period Michelangelo sculptured a marble Hercules (c. 1493-5), now lost; see De Tolnay, pp. 81, 197-8.


7 De Tolnay, Michelangelo: The Final Period (Princeton, 1960), pp. 25, 33, 37-8, 47. Mario Ferrara, "L'Influenza del Savonarola . . . del Quattrocento," p. 393, see Christ as a Herculean nude, as did De Tolnay in "Le Jugement dernier de Michel-Ange," Art Quarterly, III (1940), 125-.

8 De Tolnay, Michelangelo: The Final Period, p. 23. Professor De Tolnay, pp. 30-1, 47-9, has noted Michelangelo's heliocentric and ontological orientation toward a limitless
space: The artist imposes control by a predominant frontal view, as in most High Renaissance art, but the scene itself seethes and writhes in inner torment, as in Mannerist art; in this context the spatial dimension is not harmoniously fused with the figures, as in Baroque art, but is rather pulsating in spiral movement in and around the scene. See also Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, pp. 174-8.


10 Professor Wind, pp. 154-6, thus maintains that St. Bartholomew of the "Last Judgment" is a grotesque Bacchic saint, and is perhaps recognized as such by Aretino. But Aretino's carping jealous attacks on Michelangelo are well known and Aretino himself may have served as the model for St. Bartholomew. Therefore a "Bacchic" portrayal of the licentious Aretino-Bartholomew, carrying in his hand the flayed skin of Michelangelo, would be an appropriate ironic commentary on Aretino's pagan character and would not detract from the spirituality of the scene. On Aretino and Michelangelo, see De Tolnay, Michelangelo: The Final Period, pp. 45-6.

As regards Aretino's licentious and satiric attitude, it is interesting to observe how he employs the pagan Hercules in his work—in Sonnet XII of the Sonnetti lussuriosi, the poet will surpass the deeds of Hercules not through Neo-Platonic divine love or spirituality but rather through singular deeds of carnal passion; see The Works of Aretino, trans. Samuel Putnam (New York, 1933), II, 263.


12 See Aguzzi, pp. 157-216; Townsend Rich, Harington and Ariosto (New Haven, 1940), pp. 51-69, 146-54. Rich pp. 75-8, 124-36, points out rightly that the writer of The Metamorphosis of Ajax, despite his inclusion of typical moral commentary and his didactic additions to Ariosto's original, is fundamentally amoral and does not hesitate to maintain the most wanton passages within the text. Yet, as the Italian commentators were answering Catholic critics of the Counter-Reformation, Harington was forced to defend Ariosto allegorically against the Puritan attacks of Gosson and Stubbes.

13 The role of lascivious Pietro Aretino as a leader of the fierce Counter-Reformation critics of Michelangelo's works is one of the ironic footnotes to history; see Aretino's letter of 1546 to Alessandro Corvino, Lettere di Pietro


18 Alciati, Emblemata, ed. Claude Mignault (Paris, 1589), pp. 490-6 (No. 137), 497-9 (No. 138). Also included are Hercules' pillars, pp. 195-6 (No. 45); Hercules and the pygmies, pp. 231-3 (No. 58); and the Gallic Hercules, pp. 617-22 (No. 180). See Seznec, pp. 100-3, for a general discussion of Alciati's emblems.

19 The growth of emblem literature and spatial design can also be related to the sixteenth century development of printing and concern for Ramistic place logics; see the suggestive article by Walter J. Ong, "From Allegory to Diagram in the Renaissance Mind: A Study in the Significance of the Allegorical Tableau," JAAC, XVII (1958-9), 423-40, espec. 432-8.

20 Giraldi, Opera Omnia (Leyden, 1696), I, 571 and 574A, as cited by Rathborne, The Meaning of Spenser's Fairyland, pp. 96, 100-1, 113.
Cited by F. Michael Krouse, *Milton's Samson and the Christian Tradition* (Princeton, 1949), p. 130, n. 92. Krouse in his study attempts to equate Hercules, Samson, and Christ in a symbolic triad, but he fails to distinguish clearly between allegorical fusion and typological foreshadowing, a distinction that was beginning to reappear here in the early sixteenth century and was particularly relevant by the time of Milton.

Numerous other early sixteenth century sources for mythology could be included here, as for example Ravisius Textor's *Officina* (Basel, 1503) and the many editions of Albricus, the *Libellus de Imaginibus Deorum*, Boccaccio's *De Genealogia*, and the moralized versions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; see Seznec, pp. 224-9.


*Giraldi, De Deis Gentium Libri Sive Syntagmata XVII* (Lyon, 1565), pp. 4-5. All following references are to this edition.

Giraldi mentions sending his earlier *Vita* to Ercole II d'Este in *De Deis Gentium*, pp. 278; on Giraldi's career, see *De Deis Gentium*, pp. 468-9.

Note Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, trans. Harington, XLIII. 58: Alfonso is praised as the man who walls the city of Ferrara, who "Should be both Hercules sire, and Hercules sonne."


are to this 1576 edition.


30 Incidental references to Hercules include: Hercules called Tiryntheus (p. 10), Hercules esteemed the mulberry and poplar trees (p. 30), Hercules won nobility through virtue (p. 91), philosophical doubts can produce Herculean knots of difficulty (p. 139), Herculean pillars (pp. 40, 224).

31 Merritt Hughes, "The Arthurs of the Faerie Queene," *Études Anglaises*, VI (1953), 207.


34 Seznec, pp. 236-41.


39 Frederick Hartt, "Gonzago Symbols in the Palazzo del Te," JWCI, XIII (1950), 163. Hartt also has pointed out possible relevance of the Hercules myth to the founding of Mantua.

40 E. Tietze-Courat, "Notes on Hercules at the Crossroads," JWCI, XIV (1951), 308.


44 Seznec, pp. 234-6, 241-7, 254-6, examines the manuals in detail.


46 T. Tasso, Gerusalemme Liberata, trans. into English by Fairfax (1600) (Dublin, 1726), XVI. 3.

47 On the influence of the manuals and the uses to which they were put in Italy, see Seznec, pp. 257-60, 279-306.


53 *Enchiridion*, Chap. xiii, Hôr-v; see also Chap. ii, B6r.


55 *Enchiridion*, Chap. ii, B6r. Erasmus was aware of the contemporary satiric attacks on the Christianizing of Ovid through extremes of allegorical interpretation, such as in the work of Pierre Bersuire; see F.G. Stokes, ed. and trans. *Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum* (c. 1515-6) (New Haven, 1925), pp. 72-6, 342-5, x1ix-1.


61 Hatzfeld, Ibid., pp. 344-8.

62 I would thus modify Hatzfeld's emphasis on neopaganism and erotic beauty in the Pléiade implicit in his later article, "The Role of Mythology in Poetry During the French Renaissance," MLQ, XIII (1952), 392-404.

63 Zwingli, Christianae fidei brevis et clara expositio, cited by Seznec, p. 23.


66 Lucian, *Hercules*, trans. A.M. Harmon (Loeb Classics, 1927), I, 62-71; all following references are to this edition. Isocrates, in his *Address to Philip* (346 B.C.), Chaps. 109-10, trans. George Norlin (Loeb Classics, 1928), I, 312-3, had anticipated Lucian in emphasizing not Hercules' martial valor but rather his wisdom and justice. The view of Hercules as Logos appears already in the Orphic myth cited by Athenagoras and quoted at the beginning of Chapter I of this study; see also the general discussion by Simon, pp. 88-101.


73 In *The Praise of Folly* (1509-11), trans. Chaloner, Alv, the speaker Folly will be a true sophist, but whereas the sophists set forth the praises of Gods and famous worthies, such as Hercules or Solon, Folly will praise himself. Though Erasmus' irony does not permit us to equate the author with the figure of Folly, the mention of Hercules here at the beginning of *The Praise of Folly* might indicate to Erasmus'
humanist readers that the author is not writing entirely in jest. See L.F. Dean, trans. Erasmus' *The Praise of Folly*, pp. 19-22.


79 Ibid., p. 112.


85 On Tory see Wind, "Hercules and Orpheus," p. 210, and Barroux, Paris, pp. 100-1. Tory was a translator of Horapollo's Hieroglyphica and was familiar with Alciati's emblem book, in which the Hercules Gallicus figure also appears; see George Boas, trans. The Hieroglyphics of Horapollo p. 34, and Alciati, Emblemata, No. 180, pp. 617-22.

86 Joachim Du Bellay, La Deffence et Illustration de la Langue Francoyse (1549), intro. Fernand Desonay (Genève, 1950), "Conclusion de tout l'œuvre," f5v; an analogy between Cardinal Du Bellay burdened by French affairs and Hercules supporting the heavens of Atlas appears in a letter to the Cardinal prefacing La Deffence, a2r.

87 Estienne Pasquier, Choix de Lettres, ed. D. Trickett (Genève, 1956), p. 78. Trickett, p. 86, n. 5, observes that Pasquier himself in 1605 was awarded a medallion upon which Hercules Gallicus was portrayed as symbolic of oratorial eloquence.

References to Hercules Gallicus are abundant in Renaissance France: Trickett, Ibid., also notes a sonnet of Etienne Jodelle, Œuvres (Lyon, 1597), Sonnet II, 81v:

Jadis la France a veu son Hercule Gaulois
Dans son temple tenir les peuples, par l'oreille,
A la langue enchaînes: monstrant toute merveille
De scavoir, d'eloquence & de moeurs et de loix . . .

89 Ronsard, Laumonier early edition, IV, 134-5; see Merrill and Clements, Ibid., p. 47.

90 Chamard ed., II, 189. For Du Bellay's concern with vertù, see Merrill and Clements, pp. 64-8; the authors refer explicitly to Hercules' Chalice on p. 67, but neglect to mention this sonnet of Du Bellay, which clearly associates Hercules with vertù. Though the earlier tenth sonnet of the XIII Sonnetz is definitely Neo-Platonic, so that the implied vertù of Hercules could there be understood in a Platonic sense, in this sonnet the vertù of Hercules and the last line's allusion to his apotheosis seem related only to his heroic valor and moral achievements.

In the earlier La Musagaeomachia (1550), ll. 85-96, ed. Chamard, IV, 7, Du Bellay compares the monster Ignorance to seven of Hercules' labors, including the Hydra, Geryon, and Cerberus. The Herculean monarchs who challenge the beast are Francis I (ll. 121-4), Henry II (ll. 125-7), and finally Francis II (ll. 133-9).

91 Chamard ed., II: Antiquitez X, pp. 12-3; Songe VIII, pp. 34-5; Songe X, p. 36. Sonnet X of the Antiquitez is possibly indebted more to Lucan's Pharsalia, IV.550—, than to Horace's Odes IV. 4, as has been shown by V.L. Saulnier, "Commentaires sur les Antiquitez de Rome," BHR, XII (1950), 118-9, but I cannot agree that the "Hercule" of line 10 is merely a common metaphor, name disengaged from mythological associations. All of these three sonnets were later translated by Spenser.

The image of the Protestant reformers as the Hydra was not uncommon in sixteenth-century France; Du Bellay had been anticipated by Guillaume Postel's similar linkage in a work of 1543—see W.J. Bouwsma, Concordia Mundi, p. 270.

92 William R. Orwen, "Spenser and the Serpent of Division," SP, XXXVIII (1941), 207, has arrived at similar conclusions on Du Bellay's Antiquitez and Songe from a different vantage point. A.W. Satterthwaite, Spenser, Ronsard, and Du Bellay (Princeton, 1960), pp. 264-5, testily attacks Orwen's position chiefly because Du Bellay actually wrote his sonnets while at Rome from 1553 to 1557. But the poet's decision to publish his poems in 1558, and the corroborating Herculean sonnet of 1558 in Les Regrets, seem adequate evidence that Du Bellay intended his poems as exhortative and relevant to the contemporary situation in France. King Henry II was often associated with Hercules Gallicus, as on the door of the Saint-Denis cathedral; see R. Barroux, Paris, des origines à nos jours, p. 101.
93 Chamard ed., IV, p. 34, ll. 1-5.


105 Cited from Laumonier critical edition, VIII, 206-7, n. 2. Laumonier, p.207, n. 1, refers to C. Juge, "Nicolas Denisot du Mans," (diss. Caen, 1907), pp. 83-4, who has indicated a possible source in the Cantiques for Ronsard's idea for the Hercule Chrestien, which was proposed as a poetic project in June of 1553. Denisot's stirring sonnet to Ronsard, written to introduce the Hercule Chrestien in the Ronsard collected edition of 1560, speaks of the poet as "le Harpeur de Dieu" and ends with the sestet:

Tout ainsi qu'en la Croix l'Hercule belligueur,
Des Fechez monstrueux & de la Mort vainqueur,
Affranchist son Esprit de la Mort immortelle:
L'Hymne qu'a tel Vainqueur tu chantes sainctement,
Plus que tout autre chant chanté prophanement,
Doit affranchir ton nom d'une mort eternelle.
(Quoted in Laumonier critical ed. VIII, 206)


107 See the two thorough and eminently balanced studies by D.P. Walker: "Orpheus the Theologian and Renaissance Platonists," JWCI, XVI (1953), 100-20, and "The Prisca Theologia in France," JWCI, XVII (1954), 204-59.


On Pontus de Tyard, see, besides Yates, John C. Lapp, "Mythological Imagery in Pontus de Tyard," SP, LIV (1957), 101-11; Lapp, p. 102, refers to Pontus as a direct influence on Ronsard.

109 Seznec, pp. 307-9. Amadis Jamyn was familiar with the mythographers and with Valeriano's commentary on the
Hieroglyphica; see Yates, pp. 142-9.


111 Laumonier critical edition, III, 144-52, ll. 443-612. Ronsard's contemporaries were also aware of his high estimation of poetry and myth; See Le Caron, "Ronsard ou de la Poésie," Dialogues (Paris, 1554). Ronsard defends the true poet and contrasts him to the historian and to the versifier in his introductory letters (1572, 1587) to La Franciade, Laumonier early edition, VII, 66-7, 79-82.

112 Laumonier critical edition, VIII, 246.

113 See Pierre Champion, Ronsard et Son Temps, pp. 451-2. The Hercules fragment of fourteen lines has been reprinted in the Laumonier early edition, VI, 48. Ronsard's love poetry is, admittedly, seemingly more vitalistic and pagan in tone than Neo-Platonic and religious. But Professor Satterthwaite's view of Ronsard as an "anti-Platonist" (Spenser, Ronsard, and Du Bellay, pp. 185-99) must be juxtaposed with the more temperate estimation of Jean Festugière, La Philosophie de l'Amour de Marsile Ficin, pp. 138-40.

114 Yates, French Academies, p. 190.


117 "Au Roy," Ibid., VI, 364, and notes, VIII, 78.

118 Ibid., III, 230-2, ll. 1-68.


120 Ibid., V, 436-43. Ronsard elsewhere refers to the Huguenots as monsters or serpents: See the poems Discovrs à la Royne (1562), Laumonier early edition, V, 334, and
Reformation au Peuple de France (1563), Ibid., V, 373. The poet was of course aware of other interpretations of the myth. In a prose discourse De l'Envie presented to Henry III Ronsard refers to the Ovidian commentaries and their interpretation of the Hydra as envy (Laumonier early edition, VII, 113).


122 Ibid., II, 32.


125 Ibid., VI, 16-8. The poem was first published in the posthumous 1587 edition of Ronsard's works.

126 R. Trousson, "Ronsard et la légende d'Hercule," BHR, XXIV (1962), 77-87, has surveyed Ronsard's treatment of the myth and has suggested some possible classical sources, but he has overlooked much of the political significance, including that of the Hydra image.


128 Hatzfeld, Ibid., pp. 348-52.

129 Bouwsma, Concordia Mundi, pp. 255-60.


134 Ibid., Week II, Day iv, Part 1 ("The Tropheis"), p. 537. Du Bartas also speaks of the astral Hercules as David in Week II, Day 2, Part 4 ("The Columnes"), p. 370, but he explicitly qualifies the analogy by discounting the allegorical extremes of the Stoics and anticipating the time when Christian names can replace heathen names in the heavens. De Goulart, pp. 258-9, cites in this regard Pico della Mirandola as an astrological interpreter.

CHAPTER V

SIXTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND

1

The medieval allegorical traditions, coupled with the symbolic modifications of the Florentine Neo-Platonists and the defensive allegorical protestations of Counter-Reformation Italy and France, roared upon the British Isles and inundated Tudor England with allegorical treatises, emblem literature, masques, mythographical handbooks, and translations. The allegorical focus of the Renaissance in England is manifest throughout the period, both in explicit allegorical writings and in the implicit world view undergirding the dramatic reality of daily life. In this context the allegorical approaches to mythology flourish. In Renaissance England the plethora of allusions to Hercules, whether central or peripheral, are for the most part allegorical in nature, though the allegorical intent is more often implicit in context than explicit in allegorical glosses. We have already noted this allegorical emphasis in Renaissance Italy and France; in sixteenth-century England the continental influences are unquestionably strong. To continue our investigation of the Hercules myth we might note here the allegorical approach to the classical hero in scattered English texts of the century, keeping in
mind that these references present by no means an ex-
haustive survey.

The early English humanists of the period, Colet and
More, are not greatly concerned with the Hercules myth
despite its close association with their companion Erasmus.
Certainly the allegorical traditions of the myth were well
known, as both the mythographical treatises of Boccaccio
and Salutati had been available in England since the
fifteenth century, yet these proto-Renaissance Christian
humanists do not dwell on the allegorical applications of
pagan myth. As pious pedagogues and philological scholars
they do not turn to Hercules with the enthusiasm of the
later patriotic historians and poets such as Holinshed or
Spenser. In this respect any strong influence of Neo-
Platonism, Florentine and otherwise, upon these Christian
humanists is debatable, despite More's translation of an
Italian biography of Pico della Mirandola and Colet's
1
affinity for Neo-Platonic scriptural exegesis.

Erasmus' works are replete with Herculean references,
as we have seen, though he is temperate in his application
of allegorical interpretations. In his widely popular
proverbial collections Erasmus includes the familiar Her-
cules sayings of the day, such as "Not Hercules against
two" or "Hercules' shoe does not fit an infant's foot," 2
but they are not unusually prominent. Of the scattered
Hercules proverbs in Erasmus' Adagia, Richard Taverner's
1569 English translation includes only "Not Hercules
against two."³ In Erasmus' *Apophthegmes*, translated by Nicholas Udall in 1542, there is more mention of Hercules' valor, though the reference is again not extensive and necessitated further glosses by the translator:

> Hercules was in olde tyme, worshipped . . . [as] the depoulour and driuer awaye of all eiuils: because of the valiaunte sleayng of many soondrye monstres, by hym extincted. He was also the soonne of Iuppiter, and by another name called, Callinicis, for respecte of his manyfolde actes of pouesse, and noble victories that he had gotten, in subduyng aswell his enemies, and gyautes, as also other hongrie monstres, as afore saied.⁴

This reference of Erasmus to Hercules, as indeed all of Erasmus' allusions to the hero, perhaps echoes his humanist interest in Hercules Gallicus and his view of himself as a Herculean philological laborer. Roger Ascham in *The Scholemaster* (1570) thus speaks of Erasmus compiling his collections of sayings by immense efforts of reading and notes further that "by one labour, he left to posteritie three notable bookes."⁵ But though Erasmus continually brings Hercules to the attention of his fellow humanists Colet and More, we find little concern for the pagan myth in these early sixteenth century English writers.

Yet if the Oxford reformers did not turn to the allegorized Hercules myth, there were numerous others who did. Near the turn of the century Stephen Hawes, in *The Pastime of Pleasure* (1509), recalls his master Lydgate, who "with clowdy fygures / He cloked the trouthe of all his scryp-

⁷ tures" (ll. 33-5). Hawes, a rude beginner, will follow
Lydgate's example:

For vnder a colour a truth the maye aryse
As was the guyse in olde antyquyte
Of the poetes olde a tale to surmyse
To cloke the trouthe of theyr infyrmyte
Or yet on Ioye to haue moralyte . . . (ll. 50-4)

This familiar theory of poetry as veiled mysteries, hidden from the crass eyes of the swinish multitudes and yet revelatory of sacred wisdom and moral truths, recalls similar theories in Boccaccio’s De Genealogia Deorum and Salutati's De Laboribus Herculis, and is a halyard upon which much of sixteenth century critical theory is hung. Hawes' poem then continues with the active quest of La Graunde Amoure for La Bell Pucell, or Dame Beauty. La Graunde Amoure, who makes a Herculean choice for the active pursuit of La Bell Pucell (ll. 64-112), is spurred on by Fame, a woman on a white horse whose presence causes the narrator to recall the valiant deeds and great wisdom of Hercules (ll. 203, 233-8). Amoure is then led to the Tower of Doctrine, where he is instructed in the seven arts, and goes forth to be knighted; after numerous conquests, Amoure weds La Bell Pucell and eventually dies of old Age. The curriculum in the Tower of Doctrine includes rhetoric, of course, and here too we meet, midst other myths with allegorical commentaries, Hercules killing the Hydra or the seven heads of sophistry (ll. 1030-46).

Later in the century the allegorical approach to poetry and more especially to pagan myth continues to be
widespread. Thomas Wilson in *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553; 1560) discusses the Hercules Gallicus figure in his preface; in a later section, noting that poets' fables are allegorical, he remarks, "What other thing are the wonderfull labours of Hercules, but that reason should withstand affection, and the spirit for euer should fight against the flesh?" Stephan Batman, though he speaks in condemmatory tones of the "putative and imagined Gods of the Gentiles" and the "foggy mystes" of error in which antiquity has groped, does not hesitate to elaborate the allegorical correspondences of pagan myth. Hercules, an euhemeristic governor among the Libyans, is figured in a lion's skin, holding a club in his right hand. This portrait is of course allegorical:

Hercules apparayled in a Lions skinne signyfyeth the valiant courage of a worthy Captayne, also the Prudencie wherewith his minde being furnisshed, he subdued his outragious affections: the Club, signifieth vnderstanding, through which the motions of wicked affections are repressed and utterly vanquished. (12r−v)

The Puritan attack against the stage, with its implications against literary art in general, brought forth further emphasis on the allegorical meanings of myth. As in Counter-Reformation Italy there was need to defend poetry and pagan myth against its critics. Sir Philip Sidney's posthumously published *The Defense of Poesy* (wr. c. 1583), or *An Apology for Poetry* as it was named in the edition of Henry Olney, presented the case for poetry in unequivocal
terms and raised the status of the poet to a mythopoeic artist. Sidney's judicious appraisal of the nature of poetry, presented in the form of a classical oration, challenged the Puritans at the roots of their arguments. For Sidney the poet, whose function is to delight and teach, is able to recreate Nature and to mold reality in forms both more harmonious than historical data and more concrete than philosophical precepts. Through his controlled imagination the poet is a true 

\textit{Vates}, as Sidney says, who:

\begin{quote}
... lifted vp with the vigor of his owne inuention, dooth growe in effect another nature, in making things either better then Nature bringeth forth, or, quite a newe, forms such as neuer were in Nature, as the Heroes, Demi-gods, Cyclops, Chimeras, Furies, and such like: so as hee goeth hand in hand with Nature, not inclosed within the narrow warrant of her guifts, but freely ranging onely within the Zodiack of his owne wit. (p. 156)
\end{quote}

Following the lead of the Italian Neo-Platonists and the mythographers, Sidney associates this creative power of the poet with divine furor and heavenly inspiration. As in Lodge's \textit{Defence}, mention is made of the divine persuasive powers of Orpheus and Amphion (pp. 151-2), with further reference to Plato's \textit{Ion} (p. 192). Sidney's peroration calls upon the authority of Aristotle, Bembo, Scaliger, Clauserus, and Landino to glorify the "sacred misteries of Poesie," with his own statement further that "there are many misteries contained in Poetrie, which of purpose were written darkely, least by prophane wits it should bee abused" (p. 206).
The creative imagination of the poet, then, is not frivolous nor diffuse, but serves a moral end. The delight of poetry, which is an imitation of the essential nature of reality, directs the reader to the inner core of meaning, the fruit within the rind, and thereby instructs him through moral persuasion. Sidney continues to stress the didactic nature of poetry, the allegorical meanings implicit in the poetic picture or image confronting the reader. Poetry presents not literal historical fact, but rather the forms of the controlled imagination. If men can only understand, states Sidney, "that the Poets persons and dooings are but pictures what should be, and not stories what haue beene, they will never give the lye to things not affirmatively but allegorically and figuratively written" (p. 185). Poetry is thus essentially a form of allegory, as for example the tragedy Gorboduc, "full of notable moralitie, which it doth most delightfully teach, and so obtayne the very end of Poesie" (p. 197). In support of his position, the author recalls that Christ spoke in parables (pp. 166-7) and that, whereas the philosopher is obscure, the poet "is indeed the right Popular Philosopher, whereof Esops tales give good prooue: whose pretty Allegories, stealing vnder the formall tales of Beastes, make many, more beastly then Beasts, begin to heare the sound of vertue from these dumbe speakers" (p. 167).

But of all genres of poetry heroic poetry is the most
valuable. It "doth not onely teach and moue to a truth, but teacheth and moueeth to the most high and excellent truth; who maketh magnanimity and iustice shine throughout all misty fearefulnes and foggy desires" (p. 179). A poem that presents the epic deeds of heroes is intrinsically a type of moral allegory, for "as the image of each action styrreth and instructeth the mind, so the loftie image of such Worthies most inflameth the mind with desire to be worthy, and informes with counsel how to be worthy" (p. 179). In this regard the epic deeds of Hercules demand allegorical interpretation. Though Sidney speaks more of Aeneas (especially pp. 168, 172, 179-80) and Ulysses (pp. 168, 170), he includes Hercules in the list of heroic worthies whose deeds will serve in a poetic narrative to instruct the multitudes; men will be glad

... to heare the tales of Hercules, Achilles, Cyrus, and Aeneas; and, hearing them, must needs heare the right description of wisdom, valure, and iustice; which, if they had been barely, that is to say Philosophically, set out, they would sweare they bee brought to schoole againe. (pp. 172-3)

Sidney is aware of course of the Puritan attack on the stage and on literary art in general. Furthermore, he alludes to two authors whose works provided ammunition for the satiric attack on poetry (p. 182): Cornelius Agrippa, the author of De Vanitate et Incertitudine Scientiarum, and Erasmus with The Praise of Folly. We also find mention of the satiric portrayal of love-weakened Hercules, a
portrayal that Sidney finds understandably degrading. Yet even here Sidney admonishes his contemporary writers, with undoubted applicability to Gosson's breed, that art must serve moral ends. If Hercules is presented satirically, the satiric portrayal must itself be symbolic in scope, lest the ensuing laughter be deleterious:

... Hercules, painted with his great beard, and furious countenance, in women's attire, spinning at Omphales commandment, it breedeth both delight and laughter. For the representing of so strange a power in love procureth delight: and the scornefulness of the action stirreth laughter. But I speake to this purpose, that all the end of the comical part bee not vpon such scornefull matters as stirreth laughter onely, but, mixt with it, that delightful teaching which is the end of Poesie. (p. 200).

The Defense ends, we might note, with a positive application of the myth that seems to sum up the symbolic nature of the Hercules figure, mightiest of heroes. If the reader will heed Sidney's argument and take poetry seriously as a true moral force, divinely inspired, then "thus doing, you shall be most fayre, most ritch, most wise, most all; you shall dwell vpon Superlatiues. Thus doing, though you be Libertino patre natus, you shall suddenly grow Herculea proles, / Si quid mea carmina possunt" (p. 206).

In 1591 Sir John Harington's translation of Ariosto's Orlando Furioso was published. For a preface Harington wrote A Briefe Apologie of Poetrie, similar in its arguments to Sidney's as yet unpublished treatise that Harington had perused. The Apologie need not be examined
at length, for here we find the familiar themes already evident in Sidney's *Defense*: Christ spoke in parables (pp. 205-6); mythological fables have multiple levels of exegesis, namely the literal historical sense and the allegorical senses, whether moral, political, or anagogical (pp. 201-3), with the legends of Perseus as an example (pp. 202-3); and heroic poems are most worthy because they are most effective to "bring their profit as they do bring delight" (p. 211).

We might note further, however, that Hercules appears at the beginning of Harington's *Apologie* as if Harington would associate the legends of pagan heroes with the highest form of poetic art. The author opens his discussion with an apothegm from Plutarch: Once a sophist gave a labored oration in praise of Hercules; at the end instead of applause a Lacedemonian asked wryly who had dispraised Hercules (p. 194). Harington then draws the analogy to his own defense of poetry, with the hope that he will not be as tedious as the sophist. Yet, continues Harington, this is a backbiting age, and there are those who would condemn poetry, even as "yea sure there be some that will not sticke to call Hercules himselfe a dastard, because forsooth he fought with a club and not at the rapyer and dagger" (p. 194). Harington's comment appears somewhat perfunctory in this context, but he was profoundly interested in the Hercules myth; this statement in his
Preface should not be taken lightly. In his commentary on Ariosto's poem Harington discusses Hercules' Choice in allegorical detail: Rogero has chosen the rocky path to Logestilla (VI.55-6), or the true Christian religion (p. 47). "Now then," asks Harington in his allegorical summary at the end of the poem, "what maruell is it, if this new Hercules, described by mine author, do with so great difficulty, and through so many impediments, clammer vp to this stately seat of Logestilla" (p. 409). The answer, of course, is that man, since the Fall, has been continually faced with sensual temptations and sin. Man must choose an active life of Herculean struggle against the powers of evil; Orlando Furioso is an allegorical paradigm of that laborious struggle ("A briefe and summarie Allegorie," pp. 406-12). The other extensive passage on Hercules deals with the euhemeristic correspondences between Hercules and the Biblical Joshua, with echoes of typological symbolism in the background (XXXII.11; p. 266). In the prefatory Apologie we find similar discussion of Ariosto and his poem in terms of Christian tone and meaning (Apologie, pp. 212-4). Harington's allegorical approach to Ariosto is taken in part from the Cinquecento commentators on the poem, and Harington, like Sidney, is confronting his Puritan critics with an allegorical defense; yet the propensity for allegorical interpretations of myth and of poetic art as a whole is ingrained deep within the roots of Renaissance culture. The Hercules myth for Harington
is important as an allegorical fable with explicit applicability to a heroic poem, and these allegorical correspondences should be made clear. Following his allegorical discussion of the Perseus myth in the Apologie Harington remarks, echoing his opening statements on the sophist's Hercules oration, "The like infinite Allegories I could pike out of other Poetical fictions, saue that I would avoid tediousnes" (p. 203).

Harington's translation appeared in 1591, and in the 1590's we have explicit statements on the allegorical nature of poetry and of myth. Francis Meres states a commonplace in his Palladis Tamia (1598) when he calls upon Plutarch: "As in a Vine clusters of grapes are often hidden under the broade and spacious leaues: so in deepe conceited, and well touched poems, figures and fables, many things, verie profitable to be knowne, doe passe by a yong schollar." Abraham Fraunce is more extensive in his work The Third Part of the Countesse of Pembrokes Yuychurch... Wherein are the most conceited tales of the Pagan Gods in English Hexameters together with their auncient descriptions and Philosophicall explications (1592). Fraunce, whose elaborate commentaries are culled from Conti and elsewhere, repeats in his introduction the familiar view of the polyseymous nature of poetic art, especially heroic narratives:

He that is but of a meane conceit, hath a pleasant and plausible narration, concerning the famous exploites of
renowned Heroes, set forth in most sweete and delightsome verse, to feede his rurall humor. They, whose capacitie is such, as that they can reach somewhat further then the external discourse and history, shall finde a morall sence included therein, extolling vertue, condemning vice, every way profitable for the institution of a practical and commonwealth man. The rest, that are better borne and of a more noble spirit, shall meete with hidden mysteries of naturall, astrologickall, or divine and metaphysicall philosophie, to entertaine their heauenly speculation. (47)

Fraunce’s interpretations of Hercules and his labors need not be explored here, except to note there is little appeal to euhemeristic or to typological interpretations of the myth. Even under the carping attacks of the Puritans sixteenth century English writers do not turn vehemently to theological support, as did Ronsard in France. Rather they emphasize pagan myth and poetry as moral allegory, didactically appropriate as pedagogical and utilitarian means of moral persuasion.

This shift in myth interpretation from a medieval focus on typology and Christian analogues to an English sixteenth-century interest in moral and secular explications can also be noted in the translations of Ovid’s Metamorphoses during the century. The pagan Ovid, we recall, had been allegorized and Christianized throughout the Middle Ages, with these allegories reaching a height in the early fourteenth century commentaries of Pierre Bersuire and the anonymous Ovide Moralisé. In 1480 Caxton translated the Metamorphoses, however, with little of the Bersuire allegorization that was available in his source. In the early years of the sixteenth century, furthermore, Bersuire’s extravagant
claims began to come under heated satiric attack, both from Rabelais and from an unknown writer of the Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum. The later Ovid edition and commentary of Raphael Regius and Jacob Micyllus (1543), which became a standard text in and out of the schools during the first three quarters of the century, was not as much concerned with allegorical interpretation as with textual criticism of the poem. When Arthur Golding's translation of Ovid appeared in 1567 the emphasis had shifted from a typological to a moral and critically euhemeristic attitude toward the Ovidian myths. Thomas Thomas' later Latin collection of Ovid's fables in 1584 was to carry these didactic and euhemeristic trends even further.

Golding's Ovid echoes the familiar emphasis on the "darke and secret misteries" of Ovidian myth, though the mysteries have perhaps become less mystical than they were in the Middle Ages. The Metamorphoses is an encyclopaedia of knowledge, a mirror to all estates, notes Golding, for not only are there sage counsels and moral exempla, but:

Moreover thou mayst fynd herein descriptions of the tymes: With constellacions of the starres and planettes in their clymes:
The Sites of Countries, Cities, hilles, seas, forestes, playnes and floods:
The natures both of fowles, beastes, wormes, herbes, mettals stones & woods,
And finally what euerm thing is straunge and delectable,
The same conueyed shall you fynd most featly in some fable. 

Actually the Ovidian text itself is not allegorized in
Golding's translation, however, as it was to be in the editions of T. Thomas and, in 1632, of George Sandys. Golding, who turned to the Regius-Micyllus commentary among others, does not seem driven by the allegorical propensity of his contemporaries. He reconciles Ovid and Scripture in his dedicatory letter with apparent ease, but only after he has established that the myths are but perversions of Scripture and that the heathens come under the control of God's omnipotence. Here, besides citing numerous analogies between Genesis and Book I of the Metamorphoses, Golding includes brief interpretations of Hercules' labors. The Hercules commentary in the dedicatory letter is short but decidedly moralistic, as the following interpretation of the Achelous struggle makes clear:

In Hercules and Acheloyes encounters is set out
The nature and behaullcur of twoo woers that be stout.
Wherein the Poet couerly taunts such as beeing bace
Doo seeke by forged pedegrees too seeme of noble race.
Who when they doo perceuye no truth vppon their
ysde too stand,
In stead of reason and of ryght vse force and myght
of hand.
This fable also signifies that valiantnesse of hart
Consisteth not in woords, but deedes: and that all
slyght and Art
Glue place too prowess. (a4f)

In 1584 Thomas Thomas had an edition of Ovid printed in Cambridge that by its title reveals its allegorical emphasis: Fabularum Ouidii Interpretatio, Ethica, Physica, et Historica. The edition is prefaced by excerpts from
Conti's *Mythologiae* on the utility, variety, and truth of fables, but the main attention is directed to euhemeristic and scientific explanations of the myths. The focus of these commentaries, which follow the appropriate Latin text, might be illustrated by the discussion of Geryon after his appearance in Book IX of the *Metamorphoses*: Euhemeristically Geryon was a Spanish ruling clan: The three heads correspond to the three brothers whose harmonious relationship caused them to act as one body. Poets, however, following Pietro Bembo, view Geryon's three heads as the three parts of the soul, of which the reason is most powerful. There is also the physical interpretation of the legend: Hercule is the sun and Geryon is the autumn when the heavens thunder, "quem Sol vincit & perimit a brumali tropico conuersus ad aequinocium vernum" (pp. 352-3).

Allegorical approaches to myth flourish in sixteenth-century England. We have mentioned a few basic critical treatises, myth compendia, and translations of Ovid during the century, but there are also the Cinquecento myth manuals, the dictionaries of Calepide, Cooper, and Stephanus, the emblem books, and the influx of translated continental works, both ancient and modern. The typological associations that we have noted in sixteenth century Italy and France do not reappear so fervently in Tudor England, though of course the works of such figures as Castiglione or Ronsard were influential in the last quarter of the century. For the most part sixteenth century England turns
to didactic moral interpretations of mythology; euhemeristic rationalism is also evident, but it is directed not toward typological correspondences but rather toward skeptical debunking of the veracity of the myths. In addition there is increasing emphasis on scientific or physical interpretations of mythology, a focus that could serve in a rationalistic age either to bolster myth's symbolic significance or to deny its historical reality. But whatever the particular interpretative approach, the Renaissance artist or audience in England would not view pagan mythology, especially the heroic figure of Hercules, as merely ornamental creations of idle fancy.

To conclude our investigation of the allegorical focus on pagan myth in sixteenth-century England we might note the reappearance of two symbolic treatments of the Hercules figure that had not been so apparent in the earlier fifteenth century or in the Middle Ages—the symbolic Hercules Gallicus, and Hercules' allegorical Choice. Both of these transfigurations of the myth are typical Renaissance modifications, as we have already observed in the France of Erasmus and the Italy of Petrarch. In sixteenth century England the interest in these symbolic associations continues unabated.

Hercules Gallicus, the humanist symbol of eloquence, appears appropriately during the century in English manuals of rhetoric. In The Arte of Rhetorique (1553),
which we recall included an allegorical interpretation of Hercules' labours as struggles of the reason and spirit over the flesh, Thomas Wilson prefaces his text with an extensive discussion of eloquence, "first giuen by God, and after lost by man, and last repayred by God againe" (A6v). After the Fall, states Wilson, man had lost his reason and turned to sin. God then granted to his faithful and elect the "gift of utterance, that they might with ease win folke at their will, and frame them by reason to all good order" (A7r). Such is the power of eloquent persuasion that no man can willfully withstand it, a truth exemplified in the poets' legend of Hercules Gallicus:

And therefore the Poets doe feine, that Hercules, beeing a man of great wisedome, had all men lincked together by the eares in a chaine, to drawe them and leade them euon as he lusted. For his witte was so great, his tongue so eloquent, and his experience such, that no man was able to withstande his reason, but every one was rather druen to doe that which he would, and to will that which he did: agreeing to his aduise both in word and worke in all that euer they were able. (A7r)

Such eloquence, notes Wilson, is a civilizing influence that persuades men to subject themselves to duty. Of all the attributes of man, rational speech is the highest; it is the most appropriate quality of a God-Man hero:

And among all other, I thinke him most worthie fame, and amongst all men to bee taken for halfe a God; that therein doth chiefly and aboue all other excell men, where in men doe excell beasts. For he that is among the reasonable of al most reasonable, and among the wittie, of all most wittie, and among the eloquent, of all most
eloquent: him thinke I among all men, not onely to be taken for a singular man, but rather to be countempt for halfe a God. (A7v).

Hercules appears elsewhere in the period as a symbolic figure of eloquence. In *The Arte of English Poesie* (wr. 1569-85) Puttenham introduces Hercules Gallicus as a symbol of persuasive force and notes the legend's source in Lucian. Erasmus, we recall, had translated Lucian and had seen himself as a persuasive Hercules figure, burdened by philological labors; later in the century English writers echoed this humanist association in their discussions of the French logician Peter Ramus. Everard Digby's original attack on Ramus in 1580 was extremely critical of Ramus' fervent reformatory zeal, adding that he would not be persuaded by Hercules ("Neque hercule adduci possum") to accept such strange philosophical notions. Sir William Temple replied to Digby the same year by praising Ramus and his reform efforts as "laborem hercule gravissimae contentionis et invidiae," noting further that the Earl of Essex and other important figures of the time were avid students of Ramus. To add more fuel to the quarrel, Digby retorted with the familiar lines from Horace: "Veianius armis Herculis ad postem fixis iacet abditus agro (*Epistolae*, I.i.4-5)—there is Veianius the gladiator, who has left his arms on Hercules' doorstep and fled to the country. Ramus labors, notes Digby, but Aristotle still sleeps blissfully. To clinch his argument,
Digby recalls a proverbial saying and adroitly applies it to Ramus: "Ne Hercules quidem contra duos, ne unus Ramus contra omnes Philosophes."  

Hercules appears in the works of the Greene-Nashe-Harvey squabbles of the 1590's and here too we find the figure of Hercules Gallicus. Gabriel Harvey includes a significant number of Hercules references in his attacks on Greene and Nashe. In the third letter of *Foure Letters, and certaine Sonnets* (1592), an answer to Greene's *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, Harvey compares Greene to a pigmy attempting to attack the sleeping Hercules:

I haue heard of Gyants in conceit, and Pigmeis in performance: . . . how many millions of greene youths, haue in ouermounting, most ruefully dismounted, and left behinde them full-lamentable Histories? . . . *Philostratus* in his Icones, pleasurabley reporteth, according to the tradition of Greeke Poets, how on a time, A resolute band of dowty Pigmies, triumphantly marched to invade Hercules a sleepe. Woe to such braue adventurers.  

This scene was familiar in the emblem books of the time. In Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes* (1586) we find the pigmies and the sleeping Hercules with a moral commentary appropriate to Harvey's purpose:

This warneth vs, that nothinge paste our strengthe
Wee shoulede attempte: . . .
The pore, that striue with mightie, this doth blame:
And sottes, that seeke the learned to defame.

Thomas Nashe replied in *Strange Newes, Of the intercepting certaine Letters* . . . (1592) by reversing the Herculean
association: Harvey is not Hercules versus the pigmies, but rather Nashe is Hercules deep within the bowles of the Augean stables. Speaking of Harvey's third letter, Nashe comments acidly: "Thus, 0 heauenly Muse, I thanke thee, for thou hast giu'n mee the patience to trauel through the tedious wildernesse of the Gomorian Epistle. Not Hercules, when he cleansed the stables of Aeges, vnder-tooke such a stinking vsaurorie exploit." Harvey was not to be undone. In Pierces Supererogation, or A New Prayse of the Old Asse (1593), Harvey answered Nashe by reducing his Herculean pretensions to pigmy proportions, recalling the familiar figure of Hercules Gallicus:

When I looke vpon thy first page . . . still methinkes there should come flushing out the great Atlas of Logique, and Astronomie, that supported the orbs of the heauens by Art: or the mightie Hercules of Rhetorique and Poetrie, that with certaine maruelous fine, and delicate chains, drewe after him the vassals of world by the eares. But examin his suttel lest Ergoes, and tast his nappiest Inuention, or dainiest Elocution . . .: and Art will soon finde the huge Behemoth of Conceit, to be the sprat of a pickle herring; and the hideous Leviathan of Vainglorie, to be a shrimpe in Witt. . . .

Nashe's efforts against the Marprelate tracts were commendable, noted Harvey, but the age needs a true Hercules to challenge these Hydra heads of slander and civil insurrection. In 1586 John Lyly had linked Queen Elizabeth's victory over the Babington plot with Hercules' conquest of the Hydra; these conspirators had attempted to seize power, but to "wrest from Hercules hand his Club, who can?"
Three years later Lyly similarly attacked the Puritan reformers Browne and Barrow by comparing them to Hydra heads fomenting rebellion. Harvey may have recalled Lyly's emphases here in *Pierces Supererogation*: Martin Marprelate and Barrow are too hot-headed to be wise, and "will needes be as fiery in execution, euen to wring the Clubb out-of Hercules hand" (p. 151). One must in return deal "with heresies, or scismes, as with Hydres heads" (p. 168). For reform can be fruitful, but power must be in the hands of "braue and heroicall myndes, that like Hercules" (p. 188), and not in the hands of ignorant and irrational upstarts. Nashe, in Harvey's estimation, is such an upstart. Nashe in his madness reaches beyond Herculean limits; he writes with his pen "as if it were possessed with the spirte of *Orlando Furioso*, or would teach the clubb of Gargantua to speake English. For the flaile of *Ajax* distrawght, or the clubb of Hercules enraged, were but hedge-stakes of the old world; and vnworth the naming in an age of puissance emprooued horriblie" (p. 224).

The modern world, states Harvey caustically from his academic tower, is full of asses. Perhaps even Hercules' feats can be euhemeristically explained as victories over the asses of Arcadia and other adjacent countries (pp. 258-9); if so, Nashe overtops even Hercules in his labors. Harvey concludes *Pierces Supererogation* with a promise later to crown the young Apuleius, "heir apparent of the Old Asse":
Many are the miracles of right Vertue: and he enteth an infinite Labyrinth, that goeth about to praise Hercules, or the Asse: whose Labours exceed the Labours of Hercules, and whose glory surmounteth the topp of Olympus. I were best to end, before I beginne; and to leave the Autor of Asses, where I found the Asse of Autors. (p. 265)

Despite Nashe's offer of truce in the preface to Christ's Tears Over Jerusalem (1593), the libelous controversy continued. In A New Letter of Notable Contents (1593) Harvey countered Nashe's Christ's Tears with a virulent charge of atheism and arrogance, though by now Harvey's petty maliciousness had reached its limit in pomposity. Again we note Harvey's focus on the figure of Hercules and his denial of its relevance to Nashe:

Some surmounting spirites loue to arreare a huge opinion of their excessive validity, pro, or contra. Hyperbolicall Vertues (it is Aristotles Epithite) are heavenly miracles; and hideous Excellency and heroicall wonder, like the Labours of Hercules, and the Bountyes of Errant Knightes: but superlatie knauery is a ranke Villain; and Vgly Blasphemy, a foule Diuell, tormented with his own damnable mouth. . . . If Humanity will needes grow miraculous, it must flye with the wing of Diuinity, not flutter with the plume of Atheisme, or hoise the sayle of Presumption. 34

Nashe's answer in Have with you to Saffron-walden, or Gabriell Harveys Hunt is up (1596) was a wry comment on Harvey's "Herculean fury" when he was brought to Newgate to face nonpayment of the printing costs of Pierces Supererogation. 35 Indeed, the judge cited the proverbial "Thou canst never hold out, if thou wert Hercules, if two to one encounter thee," in relation on one hand to Harvey's opposition from Nashe and on the other to his support from
lechery (p. 122). Finally, as Pierce Penniless Nashe summarily answers Harvey's slanders and affirms his own Herculean efforts: "Hydras heads I should go about to cut off . . . if I should undertake to run throughout all the foolish reprehensions and caulis he hath in his Booke" (p. 128).

The Nashe-Harvey controversy ended in 1599 with the ecclesiastical confiscation of their books. Both Harvey and Nashe, as we have seen, turned to Hercules as the epitome of heroic endeavor to provide a satiric contrast to the pretentious efforts of each's rival. In the seventeenth century this satiric focus began to shift from a mockery of man's pretensions in juxtaposition with the virtues of a classical hero to a ridicule of the vanity of both man and Hercules. Gabriel Harvey, however, may still have seen himself, like Erasmus, as a Hercules Gallicus, working as an industrious humanist and persuading such pupils as Edmund Spenser through his reason and eloquence. Harvey's awareness of and enthusiasm for the myth is noteworthy in connection with his tutelage of Spenser in the poet's formative early years.

Spenser could have learned of the Hercules Gallicus symbol of eloquence from his academic mentor, but there were numerous other available sources for the humanist symbol in the sixteenth century. We have already noted its popularity in books of rhetoric and in university circles; a cursory glance reveals its presence also in the basic emblem book
of Alciati, the myth manuals of Giraldi and Cartari, including the 1599 English translation of Richard Lynche, and in the late century poem of Sir John Davies, Orchestra, or a Poem of Dancing (1594). Cartari's treatise includes an interesting commentary on the Hercules Gallicus as a harmonious fusion of Hercules and Mercury, united by the concord of Love, an interpretation of Hercules Gallicus that is even closer to Spenser's treatment of the myth. Sir John Davies' poem perhaps indicates most clearly the interlacing relevance of persuasive eloquence, Hercules, and cosmic harmony that was to become so important in Spenser's The Faerie Queene, as we shall later observe:

For what did he, who with his ten-tongu'd lute
Gave beasts and blocks an understanding ear,
Or rather into bestial minds and brute
Shed and infus'd the beams of reason clear?
Doubtless, for men that rude and savage were
A civil form of dancing he devis'd,
Wherewith unto their gods they sacrific'd

So did Musaeus, so Amphion did,
And Linus with his sweet enchanting song,
And he whose hand the earth of monsters rid
And had men's ears fast chained to his tongue;
And Theseus too, his wood-born slaves among,
Us'd dancing as the finest policy
To plant religion and society.

And therefore now, the Thracian Orpheus' lyre
And Hercules himself are stellified,
And in high heaven amidst the starry choir
Dancing their parts continually do slide . . .

The Choice of Hercules was similarly a popular theme in sixteenth-century literature, especially in England.

We have noted Petrarch's resuscitation of the legend and
its reappearance in Hawes' *The Pastime of Pleasure* and Harington's Ariosto; Hercules' choice of active virtue served as an appropriate symbolic parallel to the epic hero's choice of virtuous and spiritual effort in Renaissance heroic poetry. A few comments here may enable us to note its popularity and to see it in its Renaissance perspective.

In England prior to the sixteenth century there is little mention of Hercules in terms of his Choice. The anonymous late fifteenth century poem *The Flower and the Leaf* includes a choice for the poetess between the Leaf of chastity and heroic effort and the Flower of lust and idleness, but the figure of Hercules is never specifically recalled. Similarly there are suggestions of the Choice in an extant Oxford drawing of about 1500, but only in prototype. Not until Brant's *Narrenschiff* (1497) had been translated into English by Alexander Barclay in 1509 did Hercules' Choice appear in its clearly recognizable Renaissance form in England.

Barclay's *The Ship of Fools* presents the legend in emblematic form: We see a woodcut with a sleeping armored warrior in the foreground between the divergent paths, leading on the right to a hooded figure and on the left to a taunting nude, with the figure of Death gaping behind her. Below the woodcut are a few explanatory verses and an admonition to the reader to follow the path of virtue and goodness. But the legend has not yet lost its
medieval associations; coupled with this brief account is a lengthy debate between Virtue and Lust or Vice, each giving their arguments in the tradition of the *Psychomachia* and ending with emphasis on the eternal hereafter. The Choice is merely an introduction for the central debate between Virtue and Vice, and little attention is paid to Hercules' role in the action.

Later in the century more emphasis is focused on the Choice itself, with increased awareness of Hercules' particular situation in the legend. The pedagogical tone of sixteenth century English writings is evident in the concern for Hercules' immaturity and the demands on him for adult decision. William Nevill in *The Castell of Pleasure* (c. 1515-8) has his dreaming narrator choose the service of Beauty, an error in judgment that causes him to recall:

How Hercules of age yet tender and wake
New at yeres of dyscresyon his mynde sore brake
Whan he sawe two wayes the one of virtue the other of pleasure
And of the nyght it cauased hym ryght ofte to wake
By cause he knewe not the wayes of peyte measure.

Cicero had been concerned with the same problem of adolescent responsibilities and decisions in his *De Officiis*, translated by Nicholas Grimald in 1553, and distinguished Hercules' Choice from those of other youths in that Hercules was a demi-god, whereas young men "doo folowe those, that eueryeone of vs list to folowe, and be allured to their
studies, and fashions. But Cicero's schoolboy precepts are not so easily followed: The difficulties of adolescence and of rational choice could still be put in terms of Hercules' Choice in the Countess of Pembroke's translation of Philip de Mornay's *A Discourse of Life and Death* near the end of the century. Youth, states De Mornay, is "now, according to his wish, at libertie: in that age, wherein Hercules had the choice, to take the way of vertue or of vice, reason or passion for his guide, and of these two must take one" (A3v). On one side youth is faced with present pleasures that are actually future evils; on the other, with immediate difficulties against the world of passion. This paradoxical state then, notes De Mornay ironically, is "the contentment of this florishing age, by children so earnestlie desired, and by old folks so hartely lamented" (A4r).

But the Choice must be made, and Hercules in choosing a life of strenuous action and magnanimous deeds was a worthy symbol for the epic hero. The life of responsible action, as opposed to that of bestial idleness and sloth on one hand and ideal contemplative or pastoral quietism on the other, was a choice made by the Renaissance hero from Ariosto's Roger to Spenser's Guyon and Calidore to Shakespeare's Hamlet and Henry V. The medieval contemplative ideal was still available in the form of Neo-Platonic meditation upon Divine Love, but the spirituality of the English Renaissance hero lay not in his moments of divine
nurture but rather in his active struggles against the forces of corruption. Only when these forces are completely subdued would contemplative repose be effectively achieved. Emphasis on Hercules' life as one of active heroism can be illustrated throughout the literature of the sixteenth century; for a typical example, we note the reference to Hercules in Thomas Fortescue's translation of Pedro Mexia's The Foreste or Collection of Histories (1571), Chap. xiii, "Of the Excellencye and commendation of Trauayle, as also the damages that growe of Idlenes" (33r). Philotimus makes a Herculean choice of active labor as opposed to idle lust in Brian Melbancke's Philotimus (1583), p. 39. Cicero in his De Officiis instructs us again, in Grimaldi's translation:

And in like maner, more according to nature it is, for the sauing, and ayding of all nations (if it may possible be done) to undertake greate travaills, and paines: folowing that notable Hercules . . .: than to liue in solitarienesse, not onely without anie paines, but also in great pleasures, flowing full of all richesse. . . .

Hercules' Choice not only stressed the hero's acceptance of the life of virtuous action but also emphasized his rejection of the life of bestial luxury and lust. The legend had appeared visually in Barclay's woodcut as early as 1509; later it was evident as an emblem in Geoffrey Whitney's Choice of Emblemes (1586) and was described iconographically in Richard Lynche's translation of Cartari (1599). In Whitney's emblem book Hercules appears resolute with club and lion skin, standing between a clothed and armed Virtue
and a bare-breasted and enticing Vice, whose left hand is held by Cupid. Lynche's description of the scene, an interpolation not in his source, presents Vice or Pleasure as beautiful, radiant, and alluringly jeweled, making persuasive gestures to entice Hercules toward a sensual haven. In both these examples the picture of Vice is purposely appealing, so that Hercules' decision is in no way mitigated. Hercules' Choice was thus somewhat analogous to the choice between sensual and divine love, as has been previously suggested in relation to Titian's "Sacred and Profane Love." In Robert Greene's Plane-
tomachia (1585) we note the adaptability of the Hercules' Choice motif to the problems of the lover: Venus tells the tragical history of Rodento, faced with the choice whether to court Pasylla or to go on his manly way. After a painful lament on the necessity of his decision, "driven either to purchase haplesse content with fading pleasures, or to gaine a happle disquiet with ensuing profites," which he compares explicitly to Hercules' Choice, Rodento decides to follow Hercules' example:

Hercules wonne his fame, not with recounting his lawlesse and licencious loues, but by atchieueng straunge and inuincible labours, the one winning him endlesse renowne, the other vntimely death. Seeke then to brydle fancy with reason, and to restrayne doating affections with due counsaile. . . .

This Herculean choice between irrational passion and the control of reason is a familiar dichotomy of the age, and
is perhaps what Sir William Cornwallis is referring to in his Herculean allusion within his essay "Of Knowledge."

An interesting presentation of Hercules' Choice, which brings us close to the Spenserian contrast between the Bower of Bliss and the Garden of Adonis, is to be found in Thomas Bradshaw's *The Shepherds Starre* (1591). Here Dame Pleasure is seen as an artificial beauty and temptress, "Shining brightly not by Nature.../And her garments in like sort/Were as wide and wore wide open" (C4r-v). In contrast, Dame Virtue speaks of the world of creative and fertile nature and of Hercules' part as a symbol of heroic achievement:

Pleasant wits doe oft inuent,
Perfect art dooth still aspire.
Doe but marke good natural ground,
How it dooth reward the sower:
Doe but marke good natural ground,
For one touch it yeeldeth fower.

... *Hercules* is borne to wars,
Those that honour such a calling,
Must not sit and gape at stars,
Till they see their foes a falling.

... Farewell noble *Hercules*,
Of all warlike prowess the Engine,
Let no wandring Knightes distresse
Force thoughts base shifts to imagine.

The symbolic Hercules, as we have seen here, permeates sixteenth century English literature in various guises. But the symbol of virtue, the figure of eloquent persuasion, the rational heroic achiever, all of these noble and laudatory qualities of Hercules must be juxtaposed with the undercurrent of satiric denigration that comes to the
surface in the Puritan effusions, ballad literature, and late century satire of this period, to say nothing of the rash of Elizabethan sermons and clerical admonitions against the vices of paganism. To this disquieting aspect of the sixteenth century approach to the Hercules myth we must now turn.

2

Criticism of the extravagancies of current Ovidian myth commentaries had been prevalent since the time of Erasmus and More, we recall; indeed, attacks against the allegorization of pagan myths can be traced back to Savonarola and to the Counter-Reformation Index, and thence to the time of the Patriarchs. In Elizabethan England the opposition to allegorized pagan mythology is particularly centered in the Puritan scorn against the dramatic plays and players of the day, an attack that brought about the militant defenses of Lodge and Sidney and lead numerous other writers to couch their allegories in defensive terms. Stephen Gosson's *The Schoole of Abuse* (1579) is a characteristic work of the Puritan opposition; his criticism of allegorical methods, in this case of the second century Neo-Platonist Maximus of Tyre and his allegorization of Homer, is interesting in its recall of a Herculean proverb of the time: "You will smile I am sure if you read it, to see how this morall Philosopher toyles too draw the Lyons skin vpon AESops Asse. Hercules shoes
on a child's feet, qualifying that which the more it is stirred, the more it stinks; the less it is talked of, the better it is liked. . . . This type of criticism, as had happened earlier in Italy of the Counter-Reformation and in Huguenot France, only led to further insistence on the merits of allegory and increased defensive emphasis on the allegorical meanings of myth. In France the rebuttal of the poets had been a reassertion of medieval theological symbolism, but in England the answer, as we have seen, was for the most part an avowal of the didactic, utilitarian virtues inherent in myth. At the end of the century Sidney's *vates* would be manifested in the "darke conceits" of Spenser and Chapman, but Puttenham's defense of allegory in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) is more prosaic than Sidney's *Defence*, and is perhaps more typical of the century as a whole. Puttenham recognizes the attack against allegory as "a duplicitude of meaning or dissimulation under couert and darke intendments," yet he answers that the poet is not a judge of literal facts but is rather a persuasive pleader for virtue and solace and is governed only by the laws of decorum.

The opposition, however, remained widespread. Henry Cornelius Agrippa's *Of the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of Artes and Sciences*, written in Nettesheim in 1530 but translated into English in 1569, is a central document in the attack against the Hercules myth and sets the tone for our Herculean references to follow. Agrippa begins his letter
to the reader with an extensive comparison of his work to the labors of Hercules: "Wilt not this enterprise (studious Reader) seeme vnto thee valiant and aduenturous, & almoaste comparable to the attemptes of Hercules, to take vp weapons against all that Giants force of Sciences and Artes, and to challenge into the fielde all thesee most hardie hunters of Artes and Sciences?" (Alr). Agrippa then cites fourteen Herculean labors to which one could compare his work, his analogous "perill to overcome these monsters of Studies and Schooles" (Alv). But these introductory allusions to the Hercules myth hardly prepare us for the negative criticism of the myth to follow.

Poetry for Agrippa contains "fardels of lies," in opposition to the didactic truths of history (Chap. iv, D3r-Elv). The superiority here of history to poetry, a question much debated in the century, is insisted to such an extent that the story of Hercules is attacked as a "naughtie example" among those of other "greate and furiose theeues, & famous spoilers of the worlde" (Chap. v, F1r). The only further mention of Hercules in the treatise appears in a chapter entitled "Of the whoorishe Arte;" here Hercules' adulterous conception, his feat with fifty daughters of Thespius, and his lust for Iole are cited together with the lust of others, such as Mark Antony. (Chap. lxiii, Bblv-4v).

Agrippa in his prefatory letter had stated that his purpose was to lead students to the uncorrupted truth
of Scripture, grounded on virtue and faith (A3v-4v). The Reformation emphasis on the Bible as the only true guide for salvation, with the corresponding rejection of pagan myth, was to have profound effects in sixteenth and seventeenth century England and was to lead eventually to Milton's Christian epic. The pall of reformatory antagonism to pagan myth, in whatever guise it might be presented, is a sobering backdrop to the exuberant Renaissance interest in classical mythology in late sixteenth century England; as in Tasso's Italy and Du Bartas' France, there is an increasing demand for explicit Christian subject matter and Christian heroes to supplant the figures of pagan myth, such as Hercules. This cry for religious piety and the Christian epic could of course lead to further theological interpretations of the myths themselves, as had been the case with Ronsard and would be so with Spenser, but for the most part the attacks of the zealots were effectively instrumental in subordinating classical myth in the seventeenth century to positions of satiric condemnation and pastoral fancy. We note the preference for the Christian hero over the Herculean hero as early as Wilson's Arte of Rhetorique (2nd ed., 1560), where an "oration demonstratitue of a deede" is illustrated by the praise of David's feats over those of Hercules; the attacks on "profane" poetry and the demand for its spiritual replacement are legion in the period. Similarly, as one might expect, contemporary commentaries on the Bible tended to discredit pagan myth.
either as perversions of the Scriptural original or as machinations of the Devil. David Pareus' comment on the Hercules-Hydra struggle as a burlesque of Christ's battle against Satan is a typical one and echoes the Patriarchs: "Who does not see that this story is manufactured by Satan for making sport of that oracle, and suggested to the fable-poets?" 63

The satiric treatment of Hercules in sixteenth century England was centered about his effeminate subjection to the evils of women, but we can note here a survival of the medieval de contemptu mundi tradition that presented Hercules among other heroes as a subject under Death's ubiquitous power. Sir Thomas More's French poem indicates the context:

Ou est vlyxes, et sa grant renommee
Arthur le roy, Godefroy, Charlemaine
Daires le grant Hercules Tholomee
Ilz sont tous mors, ce monde est chose vaine. 64

These familiar catalogues of heroes who were all overthrown by death appear in much of the contemporary ballad literature, though the tradition had become somewhat modified through the influence of the Dicta Sapientum of the schoolboy Cato. 65 For a characteristic example we can note the poem "Respise finem" in one of the most popular miscellanies of the day, The Paradise of Dainty Devices (1576). As the author "D.S." puts it:
To be wyse as Cato was
Or ritch as Cresvis in his life:
To haue the strength of Hercules,
Which did subdue by force or strife.
What helpeth it when Death doth call,
The happy ende excedeth all. 66

As Professor Rollins notes, this section of the poem was reprinted as the second part of a ballad of the late 1590's entitled "The table of good Counsell with a singular salue for the syck soule." 67 I have found similar mention of Hercules in a sixteenth century Scottish ballad and in the recently edited Arundel Harington manuscript. 68

These ballad catalogues of heroes are exemplaristic in context and are related to the medieval fall from Fortune recalled in Chaucer's The Monk's Tale, where the tragic implications of Hercules' fall to death are drawn by showing his heroic stature in full. But an even more common sixteenth century approach to the myth was to stress Hercules' fall to lust in the arms of Iole or Omphale and thereby indicate his tragic flaw. The medieval satiric attack against women has been illustrated in Boccaccio's De Casibus Virorum Illustrium and De Claris Mulieribus; this satiric context in which Hercules was placed was transmitted to sixteenth century England in the works of Lydgate and Gower and was evident throughout Elizabeth's reign despite the Neo-Platonic idealism of the sonneteers and Spenser and the allegorical compliments of the masques and pageants. 69 But the attacks on women had debilitating effects on the heroes entrapped in their voluptuous embraces. The mighty Hercules
was seen as the noble hero who had unfortunately fallen to the evils of women; it was but a shift of emphasis to condemn not only womankind and lust but also the Hercules who had been base enough to be tempted, and we find ourselves once more in the camp of Lactantius and Tertullian. The most severe attacks on Hercules appeared in the seventeenth century, but already during Elizabeth's reign we find an undercurrent of disparagement that tended to wash away the symbolic pedestal of virtue upon which Hercules was placed. As a result Hercules is a particularly ambivalent figure by the end of the century, at the time of Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare.

Hercules' fall to the vices of women is a familiar theme in sixteenth-century England. In The Foundacion of Rhetorike (1563) Richard Rainolde illustrates a "civil thesis," or a question pertaining to the commonwealth, with a discussion of marriage. To answer the objection to marriage as a monogamous union, Rainolde's orator contrasts the liberty of virtuous marriage with the slavery of brutish lust: "Who so serueth the beastlie affections of his mynde to that purpose, he must also as Hercules to Omphala bee slaue, not onely to his owne will and affection: but to the maners, will, and exspectacion of the harlotte." Omphale, the Lydian queen who had forced Hercules to emasculate himself by donning women's clothing and exchanging his club for a distaff, was often associated with Iole, Hercules' later captive concubine; indeed, for the Elizabethans one
of the most obvious effects of lust was effeminacy, so
that no real distinction between Omphale and Iole existed
regarding their influences on Hercules. Not only had
Hercules been a victim of lust because of Omphale and Iole,
but as a penultimate villainy Hercules' own wife Deianeira
had presented her noble husband with a shirt dripping in
the poisoned blood of Nessus and had thereby brought about
Hercules' death. Turberville's translation of Ovid's
Heroical Epistles (1567) made Deianeira's mournful narrative
on the death of Hercules familiar to the Elizabethans,
but they could also find mention of Deianeira's treacherous
actions and the general waywardness of women in Turberville's
translation of Mantuan's Eclogae (1567), in The Mirror for
Magistrates (1574 ed.), and in John Harington's collection
of Tudor poetry. George Pettie in A Petite Palace of
Pettie His Pleasure (1576) tells the story of Amphiaras
and Eriphile, a loveless couple who married only for greed.
When Amphiaras hides from going into the King's service,
and his wife promptly reveals his hiding place, the in-
jured husband rails against the treachery of women, in-
cluding in his rantings the examples of Eve, Circe, Bathsheba,
Dalilah, and of course Omphale and Deianeira:

... who so valiaunt, but by women hath been vanquished
as Omphale made Hercules serve her and spinne amongst her
maides: and after by Dymira was done to death . . . .
The wise, the godly, the strong, the perfect, the faith-
full, the valiaunt, ye learned, have been bewitched &
abused by women.
The masculine point of view is perhaps most succinctly expressed within an anonymous ballad satirically renouncing an elderly matron's burdensome affections:

ffor whyl'st I Lyve in my right mynd
this promesse heare I make
to trust no mo of Ivonoes kynd
from this day for her sake

Whiche wild two Serpentes styng to death
Yong hercules as they tell
Who kept his Cradle stopte their breath
and Schape a lyve right well

Then I that can both goe and speake
may trust to bring to passe
once to be able my wronges to wreak
as well as hercules was

And till suche tyme I can espye
redresse of all to gether
with all her fawtes I lett her flye
the devillis good grace go with her

Hercules' relationship with women recalled numerous parallels in legend and in Biblical history; one of the most common was the Samson and Dalilah story, more prominent since the Hercules figure was often seen as a corrupt Greek version of the original Old Testament hero. We note Hercules and Samson as fellow victims of female duplicity in such works as Mantuan's Ecloga (1567), John Grange's The Golden Aphroditis (1577), Francis Meres' Palladis Tamia (1598), and various ballads of the day. George Gascoigne's A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres (1573) included among its "Flowres" the following verses, in which a forlorn lover decides that he can never escape the snares of love:
If I were strong, as some have made accompt,
Whose force is like to that which Sampson had?
If I be bolde, whose courage can surmount,
The heart of Hercules, which nothing drad?
Yet Delila, and Devanyraea love,
Dyd teach them both, such panges as I must prove. 77

But the burden of blame did not rest solely on female shoulders. Hercules himself must have been corruptible.

His effeminate degeneracy at the hands of women was not only due to women's wiles but also to his own susceptibility to lustful passion and its concomitant sins of gluttony and sloth. 78 The particular emphases on Hercules' gluttony and sloth were less strong in the sixteenth century than in the seventeenth, when Hercules was more openly attacked, but the hero's metamorphosis into a figure of effeminacy was widespread in Elizabethan England. 79 Palingenius' The Zodiacke of Life (1576 ed.), p. 34, had recalled the "slauish subiection of Hercules being in Loue" with a vivid image of the hero as "clothde in womens weede, the stroke of maidens whip he feares." Abraham Fraunce's comment on the scene is a characteristic one: "so doth wantonnes effeminate the most warlike hearts, and so much harder it is, to resist pleasure, then not to be overcome by payne." 80 Thomas Fenne, though preferring Hercules and the Greeks over the claimed Trojan ancestors of England, could not deny Hercules' lustful flaw:

Hercules that noble champion and Conquerour of the world, when he had done many notable and worthie exploites, whereof the world at this day beareth witnesse; at the last
to the utter defacing of all his former actions he fell to doting in such fond sort, that he laid his weapons at the foote of Iole his loue, and became her spinning slaue, refusing no toyle whereunto she commaundered him, which thing (notwithstanding his valiant deeds) at this day remaineth a vile reproch and blot to his dead carkasse. 81

In the satires of John Marston the sixteenth century attack on lust-ridden Hercules reached its penultimate severity. Hercules had been associated specifically with the figure of the lusty biting satyr since the Middle Ages. 82 In Marston's The Scourge of Villainy (1598) the persona assumes this pose and castigates society in much the same tones as Thomas Nashe had attacked Gabriel Harvey: "Would God I could turn Alpheus river in, / To purge this Augean oxstall from foul sin!" 83 Yet Marston's satyr persona, as Alvin Kerman has shown, can both abhor vice and yet partake of it in his intense concern with lust and perversion. 84 In this context the Herculean speaker attacks not only the vices of society but also ironically his own degeneracy, and the heroic Hercules becomes a figure of lust. In The Metamorphosis of Pigmalions Image. And Certaine Satyres (1598) Marston speaks of Hercules as an inordinate lecher, a villain far more evil than "lusty Laurence" of the ballads, for he:

... in one poor night,
With great, great ease, and wondrous delight,
In strength of lust and Venus' surquedry,
Robb's fifty wenches of virginity. 85

Satire VIII of The Scourge of Villainy turns from
Hercules' mighty lust to its eventual effect, effeminate subservience to women. As Anthony Caputi has pointed out, effeminacy is a prominent image in Marston's satires as an outward sign of the perversion of nature; such perversion proceeds from the corrupting false impressions of Opinion, a key word in Marston's satiric vocabulary.\(^{86}\) Marston's world is rotting, that is, because of the false values and counterfeit illusions provoked by uncorrected Opinion or the uncontrolled impressions of the imagination. In this context irrationality, lust, and effeminacy are interrelated. In Satire VIII of *The Scourge* the central figure Curio is a woman's slave, a hermaphrodite (ll. 3, 5).\(^{87}\) Here too we find reference to Hercules as the bastard son of lustful Jove, stamped with his father's corruption in his effeminate subjection to Omphale:

\[
\text{Ho, Amphitrion,} \\
\text{Thou art no cuckold. What, though Jove dallied,} \\
\text{During thy wars, in fair Alcmena's bed,} \\
\text{Yet Hercules, true born, that imbecility} \\
\text{Of corrupt nature, all apparently} \\
\text{Appears in him. O foul indignity!} \\
\text{I heard him vow himself a slave to Omphale,} \\
\text{Puling "Aye me!" O Valour's obloquy!} \\
\text{He that the inmost nooks of hell did know} \\
\text{Whose ne'er-crazed prowess all did overthrew,} \\
\text{Lies streaking brawny limbs in weak'ning bed;} \\
\text{Perfumed, smooth-kemb'd, new glazed, fair surphuled.} \\
\text{O that the boundless power of the soul} \\
\text{Should be subjected to such base control!} \\
\text{Big-limb'd Alcides, doff thy honour's crown,} \\
\text{Go spin, huge slave, lest Omphale should frown.} \\
(11. 26-41)
\]

The satire continues with other more contemporary examples of lust-ridden slaves and recalls again Hercules' extreme
sensuality:

Thou tedious workmanship of lust-stung Jove,
Down from the skies, enjoy our females' love:
Some fifty more Beotian girls will sue
To have thy love, so that thy back be true.
(ll. 68-71).

Sensual action, notes our satirist, does "clip the wings of contemplation" (l. 112), so that one's soul is "slave to reprehension / Of crafty nature's paint" (ll. 115-6). The soul thus unable to distinguish between appearance and reality is entrapped by false Opinion; the soul of such a one "doth turn hermaphrodite" (l. 146). Hermaphroditism, a symbolic form of Concord for the Neo-Platonists, is here denied any positive connotations. The affective appetite now dominates the rational faculty (ll. 173-8), the divine fire of the intellect has left our melancholy bodies (ll. 190-4), and the body, "led by senseless will" (l. 201), adores female "painted puppetry" (l. 204).

Marston's satiric attack is severe. This harsh appraisal of the lecherous and effeminate Hercules, however, must be basically understood within the rancorous pose of the satirist, who flails man and society for their inability to live up to what are the author's highest implicit ideals. Though Marston's persona lashes out, the condemnation is cathartic in purpose; in this context the effeminate vices of Hercules only point more vividly to the
contrasting virtuous possibilities of the Stoic hero. 88

The satiric attack on Hercules in sixteenth-century England is in fact not really a rigorous attack on the Herculean hero at all. Hercules' fall to lust is pointedly illustrated throughout the century, but emphasis is continually placed on either the evils of woman or the numbing power of lust, and not on Hercules' own inner depravity. The current turns in the later seventeenth century, when pagan myths are seen more as the work of the Devil or as mere irrelevant lies, but in the time of Queen Elizabeth Hercules is still looked upon as a symbolic virtuous hero whose fall to lust is of the most potent tragic significance, as was to be illustrated by Shakespeare in Antony and Cleopatra.

Moreover, in the Elizabethan references to Hercules' enslavement to love there were even attempts to mollify the bestial nature of the victim. The late century sonneteers did not dramatize Hercules' lust as did their satiric contemporaries; in William Smith's Chloris (1596) Love is a triumphant force, "Sitting upon the throne of majesty," that "made the fierce Alcides stoop at last," for as Thomas Watson's Hecatompethia (1582) tells us, "Louve not onely worketh alteration in the mindes of men, but also in the very Gods them selues." 89 In Deloney's Jack of Newbury (1597) Jack provides a banquet for Henry VIII and shows his weavers at work as they sing "The Weavers Song," which begins:
When Hercules did vsue to spin,
and Pallas wrought upon the Loome,
Our Trade to flourish did begin,
While Conscience went not selling Broome.
Then loue and friendship did agree,
To keepe the band of amitie.90

Deloney's ballad seems unusually mild when we think of the other ballads of the day, but the contemporary portrayals of Hercules in love were not consistently condemnatory. In the last quarter of the century, at the same time that Elizabethan satire was flourishing, the syncretic harmonies of the Italian and French Renaissance were being powerfully carried into England through the trattati di amore and the influence of such men as Giordano Bruno. Love as it was presented by Castiglione's Bembo was not merely a brutish and effeminate passion; through human love man could aspire to Divine Love and spiritual purity. Human passion need not be base, for it is a necessary step on the Platonic ladder toward union with the Divine. Hercules' effeminate relationship with Omphale or Iole, we recall, was available to the Italian Neo-Platonists and had its counterpart in the legendary union of Mars and Venus, which was seen as an example of discordia concors. Though the Quattrocento did not treat Hercules' effeminacy in these Neo-Platonic terms, in Elizabethan England the heroic stature of Hercules was not allowed to deteriorate completely under the satiric attacks of Agrippa and others. As he had elsewhere answered Gosson with The Defense.
Sidney rose to the occasion in the Arcadia.

In Sidney's Arcadia Pyrocles disguises himself as an Amazon and is thereby allowed to enter Basilius' forest retreat and pursue his love for Philoclea. In the original version the association of Pyrocles with Hercules appears when the disguised Pyrocles kills a lion threatening his loved one—Pyrocles or Zelname appeared to be an image of "the very face of younge Hercules killing ye Nemean Lyon."91 Sidney in his later revision, however, explored the relationship in fuller detail. Pyrocles here appears to the bewildered Musidorus in his female garb, with dangling locks, a blue satin doublet, and crimson buskins, all concealed under a cloak fastened by a jeweled ornament with an appropriate emblem upon its face: "a Hercules made in little fourme, but a distaffe set within his hand as he once was by Omphales commandment with a worde in Greeke, but thus to be interpreted, Never more valiant."92 Pyrocles' strange attire and playful song cause Musidorus to scold him for his effeminate weakness and submission of his reason to sensual idleness and lust. The excellence of Love, so Musidorus reminds his friend, depends upon the object loved. For Love:

... doth transform the very essence of the lover into the thing loved, uniting, and as it were incorporating it with a secret & inward working. And herein do these kindes of love imitate the excellent; for as the love of heaven makes one heavenly, the love of vertue, vertuous; so doth the love of the world make one become worldly, and this effeminate love of a woman, doth so womanish a man, that
(if he yeeld to it) it will not onely make him an Amazon; but a launyer, a distaff-spinner; or what so ever other vile occupation their idle heads can imagin, & their weake hands performe. (p. 78)\textsuperscript{93}

Pyrocles' answer is significant. First, Musidorus has malignèd women, for they are the bearers of men and are as capable of vertue as men are. Women "are framed by nature with the same parts of the minde for the exercise of vertue," but theirs is the quality of "vertuous patience" (p. 79). Secondly, Love is "the highest power of the mind," whose troublesome effects are the faults of the weak lover, not of Love itself. Pyrocles will devote his efforts to perfecting his own love toward its heavenly goal; in this enterprise, despite his feminine apparel, he will "fully . . . prove my selfe a man" (p. 81). Pyrocles' disguise should not be viewed as an effeminate debasement at all.

It is noteworthy that Sidney here shows signs of influence from the French Neo-Platonists, who saw love as a harmonious union of discordant or complementary qualities; we shall see this emphasis on a positive hermaphroditism more clearly in Spenser.\textsuperscript{94}

The synthesis of the masculine and feminine virtues in a love union is also dramatized in the love story of Argalus and Parthenia, a further addition to Sidney's original. Argalus, described as "a most vertuous mind in all his actions" (p. 31), is hampered by Parthenia's mother, who tries in vain to separate the lovers. She employs Argalus on "many dangerous enterprises, as ever the evill stepmother
Juno recommended to the famous Hercules; but the more his vertue was tried, the more pure it grew, while all the things she did to overthrow him, did set him up upon the height of honor" (p. 33). Eventually the lovers are united and wed, however, and we later see them in their palace, Argalus reading the stories of Hercules to his bride. The scene is a poignant one, for it serves as a prelude to the heroic struggles and deaths of both Argalus and Parthenia at the hands of Amphialus, but for the moment the couple appears blissfully happy. As Sidney comments, they are:

A happy couple, he joying in her, she joying in her selfe, but in her selfe, because she enjoyed him: both encreasing their riches by giving to each other; each making one life double, because they made a double life; one, where desire never wanted satisfaction, nor satisfaction never bred sacietie; he ruling, because she would obey: or rather because she would obey, she therein ruling. (p. 420).

Professor John Danby states, I think rightly, that this scene embodies Sidney's vision of cooperative perfection, of a complementary marriage of public heroic magnanimity and private inner patience. Friendship and love provide the key to a world of virtuous social harmony, though such a world can exist only in rare and timeless moments. Once Fortune or mutability intrude, as they will in time, the radiant moments of passionate spiritual concord pass from actuality to ideal and we are once more in the world of flux. Yet the harmonious vision is there, and Sidney's
placement of the Hercules myth within this periphery is a
gesture not to be taken lightly. We note in this nuptial
scene that Sidney does not specify which Herculean stories
Argalus reads to Parthenia, for it does not matter. Pres-
sumably the virtuous Argalus would be rehearsing Hercules'
heroic labors, but he could as well be telling of Hercules'
love affairs with Omphale and Iole, for in Sidney's view
the love metamorphoses of the Herculean Pyrocles and
Argalus were ultimately rewarding. That Sidney could
transcend the satiric emphasis of his day and show the
ennobling virtues of harmonious love, with man and woman
linked together in mutual union, is a tribute to his
artistry and a sign that we are in the syncretic world of
the Renaissance.

The love metamorphosis of Hercules reappears in
Spenser's Faerie Queene, but in the seventeenth century the
derogatory attacks on pagan myth and on Hercules shatter
this momentary Renaissance harmony. And sixteenth-century
assaults on pagan myth came not only from the Puritans and
the pulpits—the humanistic historians and antiquarians
in their more critical historiography laid the groundwork
for the later wholesale learned disdain of mythology as
fables and devilish corruptions of Scriptural truth. The
historical reality of Hercules had always undergirded the
hero's symbolic relevance; once this historicity was gone,
the Hercules myth became an idle fiction. Though, as
with the satiric tradition, Hercules maintains his virtuous
potential and historical importance through most of the sixteenth century, there are clear signs of critical debunking of Hercules' historical reality by the time of William Camden. To the historical aspects of the Hercules myth we must now turn.

Monarchs, eager to promote national pride and the ancestral rights to their thrones, often attempted to trace their genealogies to legendary heroes such as Hercules. We have already noticed this phenomenon in Renaissance Italy and France; it is similarly widespread in Tudor England under Henry VIII and Elizabeth. In fact these dynastic associations of the Hercules myth have a long history, reaching as far back as the time of Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great. The early classical associations need not detain us here, though we might briefly list the monarchs with whom Hercules was explicitly associated: As early as 346 B.C. Isocrates had acclaimed Hercules as the founder of the Macedonian race and the noble ancestor of Philip of Macedon; we have already noted in the medieval romances how Philip's son, Alexander the Great, saw himself as a direct descendant of Hercules and attempted to go beyond Hercules' storied pillars in India. Similarly there were Roman attempts to capitalize on the heroic figure of
Hercules as a virtuous progenitor: Mark Antony was considered a descendant of Hercules, as was recorded in Plutarch and later in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*; Emperor Augustus was perhaps commemorated as a reborn Hercules in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; Nero, who saw himself as *Hercules Reditivus*, took Hercules' part in the tragic enactment of Hercules' madness and death and also wished to emulate Hercules' labors; later there were more extravagant Herculean claims by Commodus and Diocletian that culminated in Julian the Apostate's fusion of the Divine Emperor, the Sun, and Hercules in a symbolic figure of Divine power.

In the sixteenth century Hercules continues to be widely associated with reigning monarchs. Alexander Barclay praises the young Henry VIII who "passyth Hercules in manhode and courage"; more close to the Court, John Skelton speaks of Henry as "In martial prowess / Like unto Hercules." In Thomas Bradshaw's *The Shepherds Starre* (1591) we find a brief allegorical commentary on the legends of Hercules, Geryon, and Cacus: Hercules is the French Protestant king, Geryon is Philip of Spain, and Cacus is representative of Philip's Catholic cohorts who attempt to woo the French herds into their loathsome caves. In Spain, in fact, Hercules as the conqueror of Geryon had been linked with the dynastic aspirations of the monarchy in Spanish national histories from the thirteenth century
Toledano of Ximenez de Rada to the fifteenth century

Anacephaleosis of Alfonso of Carthageno, with further
Spanish interest in the euhemeristic legends stirred by
Annius of Viterbo's alleged "Berosus" at the turn of the
century.105 Though a more critical historical approach
to the myth is evident by the middle of the sixteenth
century in Spain, we still find Charles V taking as his
emblematic motto Plus Ultra, inscribed on the pillars of
Hercules. Indeed, the rash of Herculean monarchs available
in the sixteenth century and the zealous attempts to parade
genealogical lineages lend particular appeal to Erasmus'
satiric pinpricks of scorn:

The next place to ryches hathe the noblenes of kynred,
If for no other purpose yet for the foilysh & wayne glorious
name. He is counted for halfe a god whiche can shew a
lyneall descence from Codrus of Athenis to hymselfe or from
Brute of Troye. I knowe not whether euer eny suche was
Borne or not or frome Hercules that ys somoche spoken of. . .

Charles V's selection of the pillars of Hercules as his
emblem brings to mind yet another segment of the Hercules
myth that was available throughout the Middle Ages and
became particularly relevant in the patriotic and sea-
voyaging epoch of the Renaissance, eventually bringing
Hercules in association with Queen Elizabeth. Hercules, so
the legends recorded, had set up two pillars at Gades to
mark the boundary of the known world; these pillars were
also thought to be placed at the uttermost limits of India,
and some authorities took Hercules' pillars at Gades to
be in reality the twin European Mount Calpe and African Mount Abyle bounding the Gibraltar Straits.\textsuperscript{107} In effect, Hercules' travels encompassed the civilized world, with his pillars remaining as monuments to his achievement and valor.

In the Middle Ages the pillars of Hercules were thus recognized as marking the limits of the world, on the western boundary at Gades and on the eastern boundary near the Indian river Ganges. We find references to the pillars in numerous medieval texts, including King Alfred's translation of Orosius, Dante's \textit{Quaestio De Aqua et Terra}, and Guido delle Colonne, whose account is later a source for Chaucer in \textit{The Monk's Tale}.\textsuperscript{108} Lydgate's \textit{The Complaint of the Black Knight} includes Hercules as a virtuous hero slain by love, following Chaucer's \textit{The Monk's Tale}, and mentions Hercules' two sets of pillars not only as the limits to his travels but also as signs of his singular valor:

\begin{quote}
For, lyk as bokes of him list expresse, \\
He sette pillers, through his hy prowesse, \\
Away at Gades, for to signifye \\
That no man mighte him passe in chevalrye.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
The whiche pillers ben ferre beyonde Inde \\
Beset of golde, for a remembraunce . . .\textsuperscript{109}
\end{quote}

But with the exploratory zeal of the Renaissance came an awareness of new lands beyond the limits first set by Hercules. The Renaissance monarch and his mariners saw themselves not only as equals of Hercules but as modern
surpassers of his ancient achievements. Brant in his *Ship of Fools* ridiculed the vanities of geographers who follow the ancients and myopically dwell on the Mediterranean "see of Hercules garnado," when modern discoveries of the New World have rendered such ancient authorities obsolete. Emperor Charles V, after the discovery of America, had taken as his heraldic emblem the pillars of Hercules, but he pointedly changed that Herculean inscription *Ne Plus Ultra*, signifying that the pillars were the limits of the world, to *Plus Ultra*; the moderns had reached beyond the ancients. The significance of Charles' symbolic emblem was not lost to the Elizabethan world: We find the devise as one of Alciati's emblems, under the motto "In dies meliora;" Puttenham discusses the device and the Spanish explorations in *The Arte of English Poesie*; and Samuel Daniel's translation of Paulus Jovius' *Imprese* mentions the emblem as excelling in magnanimity "all other which either Kings or Princes haue borne to this daie." In Stephen Guazzo's *The Civile Conversation*, as translated by George Fettie, the speaker Annibal notes that true gentility is not necessarily defined nor limited by ancestral birthrights but is rather obtained through modern virtue and heroic excellence, as seen in Charles' *imprese*:

Yet in my opinion it is not ynoough to follow the trace of woorthie predecessours, but wee must lay before us the noble devise of Charles the fifth, to wit, the pillers of Hercules, and to dispose our selves to goe beyond them, and to atteaine to such vertue, as may woorthily be termed heroycall.
The discovery of the New World and Charles V's rise to power as the Holy Roman Emperor brought quickened hopes of the long cherished concept of universal empire, an ideal coveted throughout the Middle Ages and clung to by Erasmus and More. Charles, Hercules reborn, would restore the golden age as he brought back Astraea or Justice to the world and as his mariners opened the sea passage to India and encircled the globe. Ariosto in *Orlando Furioso* briefly noted that Rogero passed beyond the pillars of Hercules; elsewhere he had Andronica prophesy that new leaders would rise to traverse the world and "all the men that went before surpasse," and that the reign of Charles V would bring about universal justice and order.¹¹³

Other writers addressed not only Charles V but also the mariners themselves as modern Hercules figures. Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* included a prophecy similar to Ariosto's of future mariners who "shall disdain / To talk or argue of Alcides streat" as unknown lands and seas are discovered; let fame speak of Bacchus and Alcides--they are only fore-shadowings of Columbus.¹¹⁴ Louis le Roy in a discussion of the sea compass praised the voyages into the unknown by "Colombus a Genouese, & Vespucius a Florentine, men of excellent understanding, and exquisite judgments, deserving no lesse praise then Hercules of Greece that was so famous."¹¹⁵ Moreover, as we should expect, the Elizabethans were quick to associate their own heroic mariner Sir Francis Drake with Hercules and *Plus Ultra*: Hariington in his translation
of Ariosto (1591) cited Drake in his marginal comments and in the "Histories" as the "new marriner" prophesied by Andronica; William Camden in the Remains (1605) noted that Drake was commonly praised by the distich, "Plus ultra, Herculeis inscribas, Drake, columnis, / Et magno dicas Hercule major ego."\(^{116}\) In the preface to Ramus' The Art of Arithmetick, translated by William Kempe in 1592 and dedicated to Drake, a brief poem by "A.W." marked how Drake had challenged the feats of Hercules and perhaps also Spanish sea supremacy as symbolized by Charles V's devise:

```
    Plus ultra certes had ere now
    His loftie bonnet vayld,
    Daunted with dent of thy sword Drake
    All courage in him quayld . . .\(^{117}\)
```

Even more significant than this Herculean association with Drake, however, was the link it provided between Hercules and the Queen. The transference of Herculean significance from Emperor Charles V to the explorers Columbus and Vespucius was as easily reversed from the adventurer Drake to Queen Elizabeth. At the Accession Day Tilt of 1590, the tilt at which the aging Sir Henry Lee passed on his championship to the Earl of Cumberland, a pavilion appeared before the Queen in the shape of the Temple of the Vestal Virgins. Before the doors of the Temple stood a crowned pillar with a tablet upon which a Latin poem was inscribed praising the Virgin Queen and her
Empire, which reached beyond the pillars of Hercules.\textsuperscript{118} In fact, as Frances Yates has made clear, Elizabeth became associated with Charles V's Herculean device and was so portrayed in various engravings of the day after the fall of the Spanish Armada.\textsuperscript{119} Ariosto, we recall, had spoken of Charles' reign that would reinstate Astraea or Justice to the Holy Roman Empire and thence to the whole globe under universal monarchy. Astraea became but another symbolic name for Elizabeth, and after the victory of the Armada Charles V's symbolic role as the reborn Hercules and catholic ruler passed to Elizabeth, with all its religious overtones of universal empire and spiritual power.

Hercules' pillars thus figured prominently in a Renaissance age of nautical expansion and conflicting national interests and became directly associated with the imperial power of Queen Elizabeth. In the seventeenth century Hercules' pillars continue to be associated with the monarch James I by writers such as Chapman, who sees the King as having stretched the victories of peace beyond Herculean boundaries, and by Francis Bacon, who supports the King and the moderns in Of the Advancement of Learning.\textsuperscript{120} The latter theme is carried on later in the seventeenth century by numerous writers including Joseph Glanvill, who entitles his defense of the moderns Plus Ultra.

But in the sixteenth century there were yet further paths which Hercules came to be linked with Elizabeth. As was the case in the histories of France and of Spain,
Hercules was associated with the legendary past of England, before the arrival of Brutus. The euhemeristic validity of the Hercules myth undergirded these historical accounts and also the concept of Hercules' pillars, but before turning to these aspects we might note further Herculean references that were applied specifically to Elizabeth and also to two of the foremost figures of the day, Sir Philip Sidney and the Earl of Essex.

The Queen enjoyed her progresses and pageantry. Though I have not investigated the allegorical masques and pageants in detail, Herculean compliments are evident in such noteworthy entertainments as those presented at Kenilworth and at Woodstock in 1575. At Kenilworth, entertained by the Earl of Leicester, the Queen was met at the first gate of the castle by trumpeters and then, in Gascoigne's words, by "Hercules for Porter, who seeming to be amazed at such a presence, upon such a sodain, proffered to stay them. And yet at last being overcome by viewe of the rare beutie and princelie countenance of her Majestie, yeelded himselfe and his charge, presenting the keyes unto her highnesse." The transference of Hercules' authority to the Queen, accompanied with appropriate verses, was a symbolic act that must have been particularly appropriate, considering the allegorical and historical connotations of the myth; at any rate, we note further mention of Hercules who "had by his labors his renowne, and his ruyn by his love" in *The Tale of Hemetes the*
Heremyte, spoken before Elizabeth at the Woodstock Entertainment later the same year. A more elaborate link between Hercules and Elizabeth is forged later by John Lyly in The Triumphs of Trophies (1586), a poem in praise of the Queen for downing the conspirators in the Babington plot. Drawing analogies to various Herculean combatants, including the Harpies, Cerberus, Cacus, the Hydra, and the Centaurs, Lyly envisions Elizabeth as the Protestant Hercules champion who must cleanse the kingdom:

These suckinge serpents, these monstrouse snakish crewe, these bloudie Dragons like spiteful Asps are set, With Hidras heads which erst Alcides slue are now of late with our Bellona mette. (ll. 37-40)

These treacherous villains seek the kingdom, but "To wrest from Hercules hand his Club, who can?" (l. 53). Elizabeth should rid the country of such venom, and "then shall Eliza make Romane Cerberus creepe" (l. 168); she should:

Cleanse Augeus hall, destroy Stymphalides seede, your souldiers reade preast, do stand in aray ... (ll. 173-4).

The allusion here to the Augean stables brings to mind a striking parallel in George Chapman's "Hymnus in Noctem," the first of two hymns in The Shadow of Night (1594). This first hymn, which with its twin "Hymnus in Cynthia" is considered Chapman's chief contribution to the School of Night," has been interpreted as having allegorical reference to Sir Walter Ralegh. In Miss Bradbrook's reading
of *The Shadow of Night* the first hymn is not seen to stress political allegory as prominently as does the second, however, based on her theory that the "Hymnus in Noctem," satirized by Shakespeare in *Love's Labour Lost* while the poem was still in manuscript, had many of its Ralegh passages deleted before publication and replaced with miscellaneous heroic similes. What is left in the first hymn, then, is a commentary on Ralegh's "School of Night" doctrine without explicit reference to Ralegh himself, even though Miss Braddock admits that Ralegh's own concern for intellectual self-criticism had few affinities with Chapman's contemplative and mystical leanings. We are perhaps on safer ground to see the "Hymnus in Noctem," which ends with the arrival of Cynthia in Night's Triumph, as an allegory directed more toward Elizabeth than toward Ralegh; the decayed state of the world in the first hymn sets the stage for the triumphal arrival of Cynthia and her pursuit of Euthymia or Concord in the second. Supporting evidence for this theory appears from the Hercules references in the two hymns. In the "Hymnus in Noctem" Hercules or Elizabeth, as in Lyly's earlier poem, must come to cleanse the Augean stables of treason and chaos; further, she in her chastity must come to drive out the lustful sun of Papal Catholicism:

Fall Hercules from heaven in tempestes hurld,
And cleanse this beastly stable of the world:
Or bend thy brasen bow against the Sunne
As in Tartessus, when thou hadst begunne
Thy task of oxen: heat in more extremes
Then thou wouldst suffer, with his envious beams:
Now make him leave the world to Night and dreams.
Neuer were vertues labours so enuy'd
As in this light: shoote, shoote, and stoope his pride:
Suffer no more his lustfull rays to get
The Earth with issue: let him still be set
In Somnus thickets: bound about the browses,
With pitchie vapours, and with Ebene bowes,
(11. 255-67)\textsuperscript{127}

In the "Hymnus in Cynthiam" Cynthia-Elizabeth has arrived
and can transmit her Herculean powers to her fortunate
subjects, including her Herculean mariners:

But then how blest are they thy fav'our graces,
Peace in their hearts, and youth raignes in their faces
Health strengthens their bodies, to subdue the seas,
And dare the Sunne, like Thebane Hercules.
(11. 124-7)

Indeed, in this second hymn the Cynthia moon has eclipsed
the sun; we note further the \textit{impresa} of the chaste moon
goddess: two Herculean pillars that frame a palace named
"Pax Imperii."\textsuperscript{128}

Yet Euthymia must be pursued, and to the eyes of the
sensate masses she appears to be metamorphosed into
bestial forms—at the end of the poem Cynthia must return
to the heavens, leaving the corrupt multitudes behind.
In Chapman's Dedication to \textit{The Shadow of Night} the poet
notes to his friend Matthew Roydon that there is "an
exceeding rapture of delight in the deepe search of
knowledge;" this is the true "Herculean labour," to "cut
off the viperous head of benumming ignorance, or subdue
their monstrous affections to most beautifull judgement" (p. 9). Cynthia's task then remains a Herculean one, to promote peace and concord through the intellectual discipline and rational control of her subjects. The two hymns present allegorically the hazards of virtuous rule in a world of ignorance and bestiality, and yet Chapman's ideals of rational control and chaste virtue remain as elusive possibilities for the Queen. Later in the Dedication to Achilles Shield (1598), Chapman's translation of Books VIII-XIV of the Iliad, the poet notes that true learning need not be hid in "ayrie termes," for truth is essentially clear; it is not obscure and can conquer ignorance as Hercules cleansed the Augean stables:

... wrought for all times profe, strong to bide prease,
And shiuer ignorants like Hercules,
On their owne dunghills ... (ll. 69-71).

Chapman's view of the Herculean monarch does not stop with Elizabeth. In 1609, with the signing of a truce in the War in the Netherlands, Chapman's hopes for virtuous rule pass on to James, a Herculean monarch patterned after the earlier Queen. The Tears of Peace, or "Euthymiae Raptus," proclaims James as "the great King of Peace" who has "outlabour'd Hercules, / And, past his Pillars, stretcht her [Peace's]7 victories" (ll. 2-3). James is a figure of chaste Peace in opposition to the bestiality of War:

He moues all Kings, in this vast Vniverse,
To cast chaste Nettes, on th' impious lust of Mars.
(ll. 5-6)
But now that political concord has been achieved, James must turn to the Herculean struggle against ignorance. "God-like," he must "cast learn'd yoke vpon those inwarde fires / That kindle worse Warre, in the mindes of men" (ll. 10-11). The task is formidable:

... the Ills infinite,
That (like beheaded Hydra's in that Fen
Of bloud, and flesh, in lewd illiterate men)
Aunswer'd their amputations, with supplyes
That twist their heads, and euer double rise;
Herculean Learning conquers; And 0 see
How many, and of what fowle formes they be?
(ll. 693-9).

Chapman does not mitigate evil, and there follows an extensive list of the follies of ignorance. Nevertheless, the poem ends with the funeral of Love, ushered first in procession by various evils, but then replaced by a youthful Hercules Gallicus, a symbolic figure of Peace and Concord who brings about the Divine Passion of Euthymiae Raptus:

Peacefull and young, Herculean silence bore
His craggie Club; which vp, aloft, hee hild;
With which, and his forefingers charme hee stild
All sounds in ayre; and left so free, mine eares,
That I might heare, the musique of the Spheres,
And all the Angels, singing, out of heauen;
Whose tunes were solemne (as to Passion giuen)
For now, that Justice was the Happinesse there
For all the wrongs to Right, inflicted here.
Such was the Passion that Peace now put on ... (ll. 1106-15)

Again, as in The Shadow of Night, Chapman has written an allegorical poem directed to the monarch as a figure of
Hercules.

Nor is Chapman the only member of the "School of Night" who shows interest in the Hercules legends. Raleigh does not turn to Hercules until his History of the World (1614), but William Warner devotes the first two books of Albion's England (1586) chiefly to euhemerized Hercules legends. Thomas Nashe, as we have seen, viewed himself as Hercules laboring in the Augean stables in his libelous controversies with Harvey.

The association of the chaste Virgin Queen with Hercules was not so incongruous as it might seem, despite the prevalent satiric emphasis on Hercules' fall to lust. In The Phoenix Nest (1593) we find a poem by George Peele entitled The Praise of Chastity where the correspondence between chastity and Hercules is made explicit; the poem merits a close look.

The Praise of Chastity opens with the poet's comparison between the praise given to strength and nobility and the higher praise deserved of chastity, which over-towers the sun like Chapman's Hercules in the "Hymnus in Noctem" and assumes the power of sovereignty:

More beautifull by wisdomes sacred doome,
    Than Sol himselfe, amid the Planets seaven.

Queene of content, and temperate desires,
    Choice nurse of health, thy name hight Chastitie,
A soveraigne powre to quench such climing fires,
    As choake the minde, with smoke of infamie.

(11. 23-8)
The honor of chastity and its victory over passion overshadow the glorious strength of such heroes as Achilles or Alexander, whose martial victories are only of bodily strength. Yet such a demi-god as Hercules, "Joves unconquered son," does appropriately symbolize Chastity, for his deeds were the struggles of vertue against irrational desire:

And while we say he mastered men by might,
Behold in person of this Hercules.

It liketh me to figure Chastitie
His labor like that foule unCLEANE desire,
That under guide of tickling fantasie,
Would mar the minde, through pleasures
scorching fire. (ll. 63-8).

To such a one that can resist "pleasures wanton lure"
should go all honors: He should be crowned in laurel, his
deeds recorded in histories, his triumph more royal than
Romulus' (ll. 89-96). In his final apotheosis:

Elysium be his walke, high heaven his shrine,
His drinke, sweete Nectar, and Ambrosia,
The foode that makes immortall and divine.
(ll. 97-9)

The poem ends with an envoy addressed to an unknown friend
whose chastity the poet admires—though we cannot assume
that Peele is here addressing the Queen, for the author of
The Arraignment of Paris and "Descensus Astraeae" an in-
direct complimentary reference to the Queen and praise of
her rule would not be inappropriate here:
To thee in honor of whose government,
Entitled is this praise of Chastitie,
My gentle friend, these hastie lines are sent,
So flowreth vertue like the laurel tree,
Immortal greene, that euer eie may see
And well Daphne turnd into the bay,
Whose chastnes triumphes, growes, and lives
for ay. (ll. 105-11).

The presentation of Elizabeth as Hercules was common throughout the period; we have mentioned Elizabeth's association with Hercules' pillars, the compliments in her Progress entertainments, and the poems of Lyly and Chapman, and there were also further historical associations in the Elizabethan historical treatises, as we shall see later. Yet the Queen was not the only Herculean hero in England. Hercules was also associated with Sir Philip Sidney after his death in 1586 and with Sir Francis Drake and more especially the Earl of Essex in the 1590's. The analogies between Hercules and Sidney are relatively minor, but they indicate the readiness with which the myth was linked with prominent figures of the day. In Moffet's Life of Sidney, or Nobilis, Sidney's patient endurance during illnesses and death in his family exceeded any of Hercules' labors. Sidney's death confirms the adage that the best die young, for Sidney excelled in virtue the ancients: "Let the chiefe of heroes sit quiet, and let Hercules sleep in the lap of his sweetheart."131 The Phoenix Nest included Matthew Roydon's "Elegie, Or Friends Passion, For His Astrophill" with "Alcides speckled poplar tree" in the catalog of trees
that encircled the weeping mourner; Fulke Greville in his
*Life of the Renowned Sr. Philip Sidney* recalled Sidney's
singular nobility of conduct as "restoring amongst us the
ancient majestie of noble and true dealing: as a manly
wisdom, that can no more be weighed down by any effeminate
craft, than Hercules could be overcome by that contemptible
army of dwarfs."\textsuperscript{132}

Robert Devereux, the second Earl of Essex, is ex-
plicitly associated with Hercules for his victory in the
Cadiz expedition of 1596. Cadiz, or Gades, was said by
some authorities to be the original location of Hercules'
pillars; the Phoenicians had erected a temple to Hercules
in the city, and local mariners had worshipped Hercules as
the god who guarded them when on the sea.\textsuperscript{133} Thus Essex'
notable victory over the Spanish in 1596, when Essex,
Ralegh, and others had cut off the Spanish ships in the
harbor and stormed the city of Cadiz within a remarkable
fourteen hours, was not only Herculean in its achievement
but was also a naval victory over the Spaniards that re-
called again the transference of the symbolic Hercules
pillars from Charles V to Elizabeth. In 1587, as reports of
the Armada preparations came in, a naval force had been led
by Sir Francis Drake against Cadiz, with much pillaging
and burning of the Spanish supply vessels in the harbor, but
the 1596 expedition was much more thorough and brought
immediate praise to Essex and his men. Richard Hakluyt's
contemporary account of the Essex expedition is filled
with laudatory asides concerning the five squadron leaders, especially Essex, "whose infinite princely vertues, with triumphant fame, deserve to be immortalized." To answer critics that asked why Essex rested at Cadiz and went no further inland, Hakluyt cited a saying from Tacitus' De Germania: "Nemo tentavit inquirere in columnas Herculis, sanctiusque ac reverentius habitum est de factis Deorum credere, quam scire." Commenting further on the saying and its applicability to Essex, Hakluyt added:

Which saying, in my fancy, fitteth marveilous well for this purpose: and so much the rather, for that this Cadiz is that very place, (at least by the common opinion) where those said pillers of Hercules were thought to be placed: and, as some say, remaine as yet not farre off to be seen: But to let that passe, the saying beareth this discrete meaning in it, albeit in a pretie kind of mystical maner uttered: That it befitteh not inferiour persons to be curious, or too inquisitive after Princes actions, neither yet to be so sawy and so malapert, as to seeke to dive into their secrets, but rather alwayes to have a right reverend conceite and opinion of them, and their doings: and thereon so resting our inward thoughts, to seek to go no further, but so to remaine ready alwaies to arme our selves with dutifull minds, and willing obedience, to perform and put into execution that which in their deepe in-sight and herocall designtments, they shall for our good, and the care of the common wealth determine upon. (p. 267).

This extensive praise of Essex and his policies does not appear in Samuel Purchas' later account of the Cadiz expedition, though Tacitus' saying is included, and Hakluyt's report of the expedition was entirely deleted from The Principal Navigations after Essex' demise in 1601, but Essex' Herculean fame remained widespread even after his death. William Camden in the Remains Concerning Britain
remarked about Essex' title "Vere dux," a close anagram of "D'eureux":

This also was cast into this Distich, since he so valorously took Gades, now called Cailes, in Spain, as soon as he saw it, when it was accounted so honourable to Hercules to have seen it once: "Vere Dux D'eureux, & verior Hercule; Gades / Nam semel hic vidit, vicit at ille simul." 137

Thomas Heywood interrupts his lengthy account of Hercules' career in Troia Britanica (1609) to compare the Argonauts to the English sea explorers, with Essex as Jason bringing back Spanish gold, and then goes on to note the correspondences between Hercules' first destruction of Troy and the English attack on Cadiz:

Though Troy be strong, yet must it Greece obey, Alcides with his Club whole thousands slew, By his sole-strength the Greekes obteaine the day . . .

So by the English was great Cailes surprised And entred, with the Spaniards that retire, They that at first the generals name despid, Now at the last are forc'st his fame t'admine, English and Dutch in Spanish wealth disguised Laden their fleet with pillage, whilst bright fire Consumes the Towne, which twice the English take. As Greece did Troy, great Essex and bold Drake. 138

The significance of the Earl of Essex as a Herculean figure in the 1590's is particularly relevant in the works of Spenser, but there are other late sixteenth century authors who echo the association. John Marston's speaker in Satire I of The Metamorphosis of Pigmaliions Image (1598) is scornful of presumptuous gallants such as "Tubrio," with his
feigned bravery and his braggard tales of fierce naval combat against the Spaniards. Tubrio has no right to Herculean honors:

Ass to thy crib, doff that huge lion's skin, 
Or else the owl will host and drive thee in. 
For shame, for shame! lewd-living Tubrio, 
Presume not troop among that gallent crew 
Of true heroic spirits ... (ll. 115-9) 139

Professor E.P. Kuhl has suggested further that Shakespeare alludes to the Herculean Essex in the Merchant of Venice and in Hamlet, where "Hercules and his load" (II.i.1.378) might recall not only the sign of the Globe Theatre but also Essex as a possible patron of the Globe and a Herculean martial hero and patron of explorers. 140 In short, the figure of Hercules in sixteenth century England is important not only in terms of his symbolic significance but also in the possibilities for historical allegory that the myth presents.

These historical correspondences, as I have noted in my discussion of Renaissance Italy and France, are one of the tell-tale characteristics of the Renaissance and its approach to mythology. Glorification of the reigning monarch and national heroes through mythological compliments and analogies is not a distinctly Renaissance phenomenon, but in an age of national pride and exploratory zeal these correspondences are evident as never before. Moreover, apologists for poetry in England continually emphasized the didactic nature of art, which should instruct the reader or
the audience through its specific applicability to contemporary life. There is some nationale and strong temptation to the Renaissance scholar, therefore, to read Renaissance literature in terms of its explicit or implicit historical allegory, a practice that has at times led to somewhat tenuous and grotesque results. The historical interpretations that I have proposed for the poems of Chapman or Marston, therefore, are made with certain reservations, and I would not deny that the Hercules references there could be as well seen merely as suitable heroic epithets. But Hercules, unlike other mythological figures who flourished in their naturalistic clarity during the Renaissance, had both a symbolic and a specific historical relevance. The Hercules figure partakes of both allegorical significations and historical reality simultaneously, and emphasis on one aspect of the myth should not necessarily exclude its other ramifying features. We can observe these multiple layers of meaning more clearly in Spenser, but first a further look is necessary here to note Hercules' significant appearance in English Renaissance histories and euhemeristic narratives.

In the sixteenth century, despite the increasing critical protestations against ancient legends by Renaissance historians such as Polydore Vergil or William Camden, Hercules remained a significant figure in his euhemeristic context. The process by which the account of the man Hercules had been recorded and transmitted was as familiar to
Renaissance England as it had been to Euhemerus himself: Puttenham in *The Arte of English Poesie* clearly stated that poets wrote historical poems to praise heroes "as most resembled the gods by excellencie of function, and had a certaine affinitie with them, by more then humane and ordinarie vertues shewed in their actions here vpon earth." (p. 35). Such poems, continued Puttenham, praised heroes by:

... shewing their high estates, their Princely genealogies and pedegree, mariajes, alliances, and such noble exploites, as they had done in th' affaires of peace & of warre to the benefit of their people and countries, by inuention of any noble science, or profitable Art, or by making wholesome lawes or enlarging of their dominions by honorable and iust conquests, and many other ways. Such personages among the Gentiles were Bacchus, Ceres, Perseus, Hercules, Theseus and many other; who thereby came to be accompted gods and halfe gods or goddesses & had theircomedations gluuen by Hymne accordingly or by such other poems as their memorie was therby made famous to the posteritie for euer after. (pp. 35-6)

"Howe should we know, if it were not for Writers and Historiographers," asked John Florio, "... How Hercules vsed his forces? ... And how should we know, if it were not for writers, how desire of fame moued ... Hercules the Theban to set his pylars, and where he set them?"

Such accounts could be immeasurably valuable to the modern reader, for they serve to illustrate past valor and thereby encourage present virtuous emulation. As the English translator of Joseph ben Gorion's Jewish history stated:

Every man deliteth to behold the pictures of auncient
persons, as of Hercules, Hector, Julius Caesar, Arthur, and reverenceth them as though they were halfe Gods: how much more pleasure should it be to behold the lively images of their mindes which appeare in their actes and dedes whyle thei were here in this life, whereby we shoule learne to knowe good from evil, and by the applying of their dedes unto our maners, with considering the event and successe they had of their actions, we maye take ether an example or some admonicion, or occasion to amend our lives, wherein besides pleasure, is also profit.

A chief source for these euhemerized Hercules legends in Renaissance England was Caxton's translation of Le Fèvre's Recuvell of the Historyes of Troye (1475). Gavin Douglas was undoubtedly aware of Caxton's work when he placed Hercules in Venus' mirror of historical heroes in The Palace of Honour (1501), referring only to his rescue of Hesione and the first destruction of Troy; Stephen Hawes in The Example of Vertu (1510) has "Dame Hardynes" elaborate various deeds of Hercules, "the puyssaunt geaunt," to support her plea before Justice that she is most profitable to men, and adds:

Who more of his actes wyll haue report
To the Troyans story lette hymn resort.

The real gauge of the Recuvell's popularity, however, appears in the indebtedness that William Warner owed to the work when in 1586 he produced the first four books of Albion's England. This historical verse narrative, written by a possible follower of "The School of Night," displays a selected group of Hercules' deeds in the chronological order of the Recuvell, though with little of Caxton's heroic
eloquence. The context is euhemeristic, as in Caxton, but Warner does not rise beyond this level to the symbolic power evident in the earlier Recuyell. To illustrate, we need only recall Deianira's lament at the death of Hercules, quoted earlier from Caxton, and then note Warner's light, almost mocking approach to the same subject:

His ghoste she voucheth and the god
To witnes, that her minde
Was gyltes of a traitrous thought:
"Nor thinke me so vnkinde
(Sweet husband) as to haue the will
To ouerliue thee heer,
But that my ghosts before thy ghoste
It selue of guile shall cleer:

And now I come, ah now I come,
Forgiue ye gods the deed,"
She sayde: and pearsing so her breast,
A breathless corse did bleed.140

Nevertheless, Warner's account is significant in that such extensive emphasis is given to the euhemerized Hercules myth--of the twelve books spanning the centuries between Noah's son Japhet and Queen Elizabeth, the Hercules legends take up two.

From the verse narrative of Albion's England we pass to the Renaissance historical treatises themselves. Here the euhemeristic Hercules plays a crucial role in the early history of Britain, as he had similarly done in the Renaissance histories of Spain and France. The genealogical link between Hercules and the Trojan line was available to the
Elizabethans from two distinct historical traditions, as Isabel Rathborne has accurately pointed out. In one tradition the Greek Hercules, son of Jove and Alcmena and champion of the labors, had had an illicit affair in Italy after the conquest of Geryon in Spain. From this lustful union, either with Marcia the wife of King of Paunus or with her daughter, had sprung Latinus, whose daughter Lavinia became the eventual wife of Aeneas. From Aeneas, of course, the Trojan genealogy passed to Brutus and thence to the English Tudor monarchs in the sixteenth century. This traditional account of the Greek Hercules was also the context in which the other deeds of Hercules already familiar to us were placed, including the first destruction of Troy, so that, paradoxical as it might seem, Hercules could appear both as the destroyer of Troy and as the founder of the Trojans in the same historical framework. Despite this incongruity, the Greek Hercules was seen as the progenitor of the Trojans and the British kings in such popular works as Caxton's *Recuyell* and Warner's *Albion's England*, which accounts were adumbrated by those in Higden's *Polychronicon* and Hardyng's *Chronicle*.

But Higden in the *Polychronicon*, we recall, was skeptical of the legendary exploits of the Greek Hercules, since the Hercules name had been attributed to so many historical heroes. Possibly there was more than one Hercules; Boccaccio had mentioned several and Higden distinguished at least two separate historical figures
of that name. The confusion was never really clarified in
the Renaissance until late in the sixteenth century, when
critical historians began to suspect that the figure of
Hercules never existed at all but was only a perverted
version of the Biblical Samson or Joshua. At the end of
the fifteenth century, however, an attempt at clarity was
made by Annius of Viterbo, whose spurious chronicle of
"Berosus" the Chaldean presented Hercules as a Libyan, the
son of Osiris or Bacchus and the victor over Neptune's
son Albion in France. This Hercules of Lybia, not
Greece, had overcome Geryon and founded Troy through his
progeny. The union of the Libyan Hercules with Araxa the
Younger and with Galatea the daughter of Celte, King of Gaul,
moreover, were both legitimate; they produced respectively
Tuscus, ancestor of Dardanas who was the founder of Troy,
and Galateus, ruler of Gaul. Annius had taken his material
partly from the Bibliotheca Historica of Diodorus Siculus,
a classical source available to the Elizabethans in Skelton's
English translation, and the question of the validity
of the Berosus chronicle and its theories became contro-
versial issues throughout the century.

This controversy over the merits of the Berosus
chronicle, which provided a dynastic link between Hercules
and the Tudors and was thus an available authority for
Herculean references to the Queen and to England's national
heroes, is a touchstone by which we can measure Hercules'
importance in the Elizabethan histories. Arthur Kelton's
Chronycle with a Genealogie (1547) traced Edward VI's ancestry to Osiris, father of "great Hercules Kyng of Egipte, Italie, Almayne, Phenice, Phrigie, Libie, Argis, Affricke, Gall Seltike and Tuscan;" in the margin Kelton noted that Diodorus and Berosus affirmed that this Hercules was not the Greek hero. Various other writers also followed Berosus: Jean Lemaire had accepted the Berosus account in linking Hercules with the Trojan origin of the Franks in his Illustrations de Gaule (1509-13); later in the century Jean Cartigney's The Wandering Knight (1557), translated into English in 1581, took from Berosus and Lemaire the passages on Hercules in a chapter in which Folly discusses her influence among the ancients. Here the Libyan Hercules is noted as a great warrior and benefactor, whereas in contrast the Greek Hercules is seen as governed by Folly:

I governed little Hercules of Greece, otherwise called Alceus. . . . Unto this same Hercules, the lying Greeks, full of vain eloquence, give the name and title of great Hercules of Lybia, which is most false. For that Hercules of Greece was the first pirate that ever roved on the seas, and abounded with all vice, following the steps of his father Jupiter the adulterer, in all respects; and as he lived, even so he died. 153

Miss Evans, the editor of this text, suggests that Cartigney, in putting Berosus' account in the mouth of Folly, may be critical of Berosus' validity. This approach to Berosus should not surprise us, for in the latter half of the century men began to question the evidence for
Annius' purported Berosus chronicle. In 1563 Gaspar Varrerius wrote an attack on Berosus in Rome; this censure became widely influential, being cited to question Berosus in Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1577; 1587) and emphatically to reject him in Stow's *Annales* (1580) and Camden's *Britannia* (1586). Though other writers including Charles Estienne, Jean Bodin, and Harrison continued to utilize Berosus as an authoritative account, by the end of the century the "Berosus" of Annius was in strong disrepute. Spenser may have called upon the Berosus tradition in Book V of the *Faerie Queene* (V.1.2), but after Spenser this historical underpinning of the Hercules myth was rejected almost entirely.

The Berosus chronicle depicted the Libyan Hercules not only as a progenitor of the Trojans, but also as the conqueror over Albion, a giant son of Hercules' brother Neptune. In the Berosus account Osiris' sons Typhon and Neptune had rebelled against their father Osiris and had precipitated a war between the opposing familial factions, with Hercules and his mother Isis opposing Typhon, Neptune, and his tyrannical cohorts. Neptune's sons eventually migrated throughout Europe, so that much of Hercules' later travels and labors were against his nephews, including Albion the giant of Britain. We find the Hercules-Albion battle presented at great length in the early sections of Holinshed's *Chronicles* and in Harrison's "Description of Britaine" pre-faced to Holinshed, with further mention of the legend in
the *Mirror for Magistrates*.

But, as with the Berosus chronicle as a whole, critics soon scoffed at the belief that "Albion," the early name of Britain, should be attributed to a giant who had supposedly fought Hercules and whose giant followers had remained in Britain to copulate with the exiled daughters of King Denaus or Dioclesian. Holinshed recorded the tales, but with hesitancy and skepticism; at the end of his account, noting the current censure of Berosus, Holinshed remarked candidly that "we haue but shewed the coniectures of others, till time that some sufficient learned man shall take vpon him to decipher the doubts of all these matters" (I, 436). Though Harrison brought forth numerous authorities to prove that giants were historically possible, alluding to the battle between Hercules and Antaeus as a classic example, and though the Hercules-Albion struggle that took place in France was also recorded in the works of Pomponius Mela, by the latter half of the century the origins of England and its ancient names were being seen under the critical scrutiny of humanist historians and antiquarians. Polydore Vergil had first examined the legends of Albion and of Brutus with a critical eye; despite his euhemeristic approach to mythology elsewhere, Vergil was skeptical of the Brutus legends and wholly ignored mention of Hercules or the daughters of Dioclesian—the name Albion probably originated from the white cliffs of Dover. Similarly we find Robert
Fabyan in his *Chronicle* (1559 ed.) ignoring the Albion-Hercules story and accounting for the name "Albion" by the white rocks evident on the English coast; Warner's *Albion's England*, despite the title, only mentioned the "fiend-breed Albinests" in one brief stanza of six lines, with no reference to Hercules. William Camden in the *Britannica* (1586) presented the critical position at the end of the century more bluntly than most when, noting the rational explanation of the white rocks and chalky soil for the name Albion, he remarked:

The name Albion seems to have taken its rise from the vanity of the Greeks, their fabulous turn, and desultory levity in inventing names . . . . But who can with patience hear the impudent fiction of that wretch who asserts that Albion was called from *Albina*, one of the thirty daughters of Dioclesian king of Syria. . . .

Camden's critical skepticism is tempered somewhat by his awareness of the efficacious patriotic results deriving from national legends of the origin of Britain, but he is still obstinately rationalistic, both with the legends of Hercules and with those of the Trojan Brutus. The theory of the Trojan origin of Britain through the arrival of Brutus, descendant of Aeneas, was in a crossfire of Tudor controversy similar to that we have seen with Albion. We need not dwell here on this subject, which has been discussed in detail by Professors Greenlaw and Bush, except to note that the attempts to determine who were the first inhabitants of Britain and therefore Elizabeth's genealogical
descendants were often led to consider the evidence for Albion and also Hercules. Some supporters of Geoffrey of Monmouth's traditional account of Brutus, such as Robert Fabyan or John Stow, not only rejected the skeptic Polydore Vergil and the earlier fifteenth-century Bishop Weathamstead, but also were led to discredit the Herculean claims of the spurious Berosus chronicle.

Camden's balanced discussion of the controversy in the Britannia gives us an insight into the contemporary mixed motivations of on one hand national pride and unbiased critical analysis on the other. Camden, skeptical of Geoffrey and attracted to the critical arguments of Polydore Vergil, Jean Bodin, and others, will refer the whole question to debate in the newly formed Society of Antiquaries (I, li-liii). Though these stories are actually false, it is worthwhile that men see themselves as descended from ancient heroes; indeed, Camden recognizes that "nations in early ages referred their origin to Hercules, in later ones to the Trojans" (I, liv). In this regard Camden speaks at length of the possible Gallic origin of the Britons and notes its connections with Hercules (I, liv-lxv): At the French site of the Hercules-Albion struggle, for example, there are quantities of Stones, as if Jupiter or Osiris had sent them down to aid his son, which the French call "le Craux" and in English are called "Craig"—the whole Hercules-Albion story is false, but one can deduce evidence of this sort to establish connections
between the Britons and the early Gauls or Celts.

Hercules may indeed have had a son Britannia by Celtice, the Gallic daughter of Bretanus, and thereby established the Herculean origin of the Celts and the later Britons (I, liii).

A related question, finally, was whether Hercules ever came to Britain himself after his conquest over Albion. Lilio Giraldi's Vita Herculis provided the chief authority for this theory: Stow, Holinshed, and Camden all cited Giraldi's account, though Stow and Holinshed were somewhat cautious and Camden rejected Giraldi altogether.

But there was also the factual evidence of the finger of land on the coast of Devonshire called by Ptolemy Herculis promontorium, or in Elizabethan times "Hertypoint."

Holinshed mentioned it as further conclusive evidence of Hercules' presence in Britain, William Harrison referred in passing to it and to a recently seen Herculean monument, and Camden, as usual, was skeptically critical.

Camden's discussion is worth quoting here as an example of the contemporary diverse approaches to the Hercules myth and Camden's own antiquarian critical propensities that would become dominant in the later seventeenth century:

The name of this promontory gave rise to a plausible story of Hercules' having come into Britain, and fought with certain giants. Whether it be true, as the Mythologists assert, that there was no such person as Hercules, and that he means no more than the power of human prudence to subdue Pride, Lust, Envy, and such like monsters; or whether by Hercules be meant the Sun, as the heathen
theologians say, and that the twelve labours of Hercules are only the twelve signs of the Zodiac through which the sun passes in his annual revolution, let the inventors of the story answer for. I am ready to believe Hercules a real person, and even, with Varro, to allow forty-three Hercules's, all whose labours are ascribed to the single son of Alcmene. I cannot, however, persuade myself that Hercules came hither, unless he crossed the ocean in the golden bowl, i.e., a golden ship, which Nereus gave him, of which Athenaeus writes. It may, perhaps, be objected, that Fr. Philelphus in his epistles, and Lilio Gyraldi in his "Hercules," affirm this. My readers must excuse if those modern writers amuse me without convincing me, when Diodorus Siculus, who traced the Grecian history back to the remotest periods, expressly affirms that neither Hercules nor Bacchus were ever in Britain. I take it therefore for granted that the vanity of the Greeks, or the religion of the Britans, gave the name of Hercules to this point. The latter, a warlike people, have ever held brave men in high esteem, and the subduers of monsters in the highest reverence. The Greeks have made every great exploit, wherever atchieved, serve to advance the reputation of Hercules, and, as he was a great traveller, travellers used to sacrifice to him, and consecrate to him the places where they landed. Hence we have in Campania the rock of Hercules, in Liguria Hercules' port, in Germany Hercules' grove, in Mauritania, Galatia, and Britain, Hercules' promontory. (I, 37-8)

Undergirding the sixteenth-century appearances of the euhemeristic Hercules in the histories and the historical narratives were the Renaissance views of historiography. We have already noted the vogue for a critical approach to history in the Italian humanists; in England this humanistic concern for accurate sources and factual history, a concern at the same time motivated by increased national loyalties and patriotic pride, is seen clearly in the efforts of Polydore Vergil and the later antiquarians such as Leland and Camden. Coupled with this critical emphasis came an increased awareness of the superiority of modern achievement and national glory over the deeds of the ancients and the
medieval past, evident in the 1530's in the rise of the vernacular as a literary vehicle or, as has been indicated, later in the century in the imperial associations of the pillars of Hercules. Both the Renaissance emphasis on the moderns and the new critical historiography, however, tended in time to react against the renewed interest in classical myth and its possible dynastic euhemeristic associations. The Queen, Essex, or Drake could be viewed as modern Hercules figures in a typological sense, in that they fulfilled historically what Hercules could foreshadow, but this argument could be turned against the ancient classical hero in order to present him as only an inferior copy of the later moderns. Jean Bodin with his cyclic view of history in the *Methodus*, recommended by Sidney to his brother Robert, rejected the medieval theory of the four monarchies, but this in turn led to a rejection of the golden age and its prominent heroes:

This, then, is that golden age which produced such monsters for us. I make the same judgment about Hercules who, Manetho reported, was the greatest of the pirates. He allied Theseus and Pirithous with him in criminal association, and when they had carried off Helen and had tried to take the daughter of King Molossus from her father, he threw them into prison. The one was torn by the Cerberian hounds; the other would have been torn in a short time, if he had not been called back from the infernal regions by the prayers of Hercules, or rather if he had not been saved for crueler punishments. Furthermore, who was stronger in all kinds of lust than Hercules, or shall I say more abominable?170

Moreover, once the humanist historians turned their critical scrutiny upon Hercules in his euhemeristic context
and began to question his historicity, the whole historical foundation of the myth became imperiled. We do not find all of Hercules' labors being questioned as early as the sixteenth century, but there are already portents of the future in the rejection of the Berosus chronicle and in the critical edge of Camden's *Britannica*. Gabriel Harvey playfully suggested in *Pierces Supererogation* that perhaps all of Hercules' labors were victories over Arcadian asses; by the end of the century the critical rationalists could take this seriously.

Critical humanism is not, however, the only facet of Tudor historiography. As numerous scholars have pointed out, the medieval traditions of historiography were prevalent throughout the sixteenth century—Ralegh could still write a universal history as late as 1614, with uncritical reliance on Scripture for the early chronology. The providential view of history, though it might clash with the Renaissance emphasis on man's own rational control, lay behind much of Elizabethan history writing. Moreover, by the end of the century the doctrine of the progressive decay of the world was gaining ascendency, to be revealed more starkly in Donne and Goodman in the early 1600's. The heavy hand of Providence seemed to be pressing down for the eventual final Judgment.

In this context the rationalistic forces directed toward classical myth were channeled toward a Christian focus: Hercules was either a man or a devil; in either case,
his legends were perversions of the true deeds of Biblical
originals. Philip de Mornay, in a work translated by
Sidney and Golding, spoke of the heathen gods as merely
men or perhaps demons whose legends were based on Scriptural
originals—"the mightie deedes of Hercules are feyned out
of y doings of Sampson." As in Tasso's Italy and Du
Bartas' France there is an increasing concern with
Christian history, with corresponding subservience of pagan
myth to what are considered its Christian originals. In
the Middle Ages pagan mythology had found its euhemeristic
niche in the universal histories and had thus been avail-
able for typological symbolic associations; in the Renais-
sance the new critical historiography and the conscious
awareness of temporal perspective eroded these euhemeristic
and typological foundations, so that by the seventeenth
century Hercules was no longer available to Phineas Fletcher
or Milton as he had been to Michelangelo or Ronsard.
Critical rationalism, the idea of progress, the growth of
empirical science—all of these factors were not dominant
by 1600, but by this time a turning point had been reached;
the golden Renaissance age of Elizabeth was being challenged
by the skeptical rationalism of Camden and Bacon and the
acrid realism of Webster and Donne.

In the last quarters of the sixteenth century, however,
a figure arose like Dante at the peak of the Middle Ages to
embody England's Renaissance in one of its greatest
monuments—Edmund Spenser's The Faerie Queene. Spenser
and his artistic creations are tributes to the fertility of the Renaissance imagination; perhaps of all the various works we have discussed in this study Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* stands out as the most significant and characteristic achievement of the Renaissance. And, appropriately so, the Hercules myth is of major importance within Spenser's architectural and allegorical framework in his poem. Our discussion of the Hercules myth in the Renaissance can end with no better illustration than the works of Edmund Spenser.

Spenser's interest in the Hercules myth is evident throughout his literary career. The first known work of the poet, a translation from French of miscellaneous sonnets in Vander Noodt's *A Theatre for Worldlings* (1569), includes as Sonnet VIII the tenth sonnet of Du Bellay's *Songe ou Vision* that was appended to *Le Premier Livre des Antiquitez de Rome* (1558). Spenser's translation is presented in an emblematic context: We view first a disconsolate woman weeping by the bank of a stream; underneath this picture the poem clarifies the source of her sorrow—the present chaotic state of Rome, of which she is the symbol:

> Where is thy glory and the auncient praise,  
> Where all worldes hap was reposed,
When erst of Gods and man I worshipt was,
Alas, suffisde it not that ciuile bate
Made me the spoile and bootie of the world,
But this new Hydra mete to be assailde
Euen by an hundred such as Hercules
With seuen springing heds of monstrous crimes,
So many Nerces and Caligulaes
Must still bring forth to rule this croked shore.
(1l. 6-15)\(^4\)

This sonnet reappeared later in Spenser's volume of Com-
plaints (1591) as the tenth sonnet of the Visions of
Bellay, and in the Complaints we not further poems alluding
to Rome as the Hydra. The Ruins of Rome, another trans-
lated piece from Du Bellay's Antiquitez de Rome, includes
a lament that there is no Hercules to repress the Hydra
that is Rome, once a city full of "warriors glorious" but
now only ravaged by "ranke seed" (1l. 131-6). In the Ruines
of Time we find Rome again as the fallen Hydra beast of
seven heads:

And where is that same great seuen headded beast,
That made all nations vassals of her pride,
To fall before her feete at her beheast,
And in the necke of all the world did ride?
(1l. 71-4)

Du Bellay's original Antiquitez, we recall, had been in
part an attack against the Huguenot opposition to Henry II
and the papal corruption in Rome, but in The Faerie Queene
Spenser was to utilize the Hydra image for Protestant
purposes. In Book I of The Faerie Queene we find the Red-
crosse Knight a captive of the giant Orgoglio and Duessa:
Duessa is given "gold and purple pall to weare, / And triple
crowne set on her head full hye" (I.vii.16), while she rides a monstrous Hydra:

Such one it was, as that renowned Snake
Which great Alcides in Stremona slew,
Long fostred in the filth of Lerna lake,
Whose many heads out budding euer new,
Did breed him endesse labour to subdue:
But this same Monster much more vgly was;
For seuen great heads out of his body grew,
An yron brest, and backe of scaly bras,
And all embrewd in bloud, his eyes did shine as glas.
(I.vii.17)

Du Bellay's emphasis on the Hydra of sedition and slander would provide an immediate source for Spenser's inclusion of the Hydra reference here, for in the historical allegory of Book I Duessa and the Hydra can be interpreted respectively as Mary Tudor and the malevolent power of papal Catholicism. Duessa's monster is then destroyed by the shield of Prince Arthur, a figure, like Hercules, popular for his legendary exploits and historical associations with the Tudor monarchy. In terms of historical allegory the defeat of Duessa's Hydra here by Arthur could signify thus the conquest of the Papacy by the reborn Arthur or the Tudor Queen. Either Arthur or Hercules were appropriate legendary figures to symbolize the power and virtuous ambitions of the Tudors; when Arthur is linked with Hercules, as he is here and in later crucial incidents in the narrative, the historical associations are proportionately intensified. The Hydra of slander and sophistry, echoed later in Book VI as the Blatant Beast,
here serves as a warning to the monarchy to eschew treacherous flatterers and to combat sedition and sham with the shield of humble virtue, the spiritual insight of Arthur's shield against which:

No magicke arts hereof had any might,  
Nor bloudie wordes of bold Enchaunters call,  
But all that was not such, as seemd in sight,  
Before that shield did fade, and suddeine fall.  
(I.vii.35)

The historical allegory in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* is an important focus of meaning in the poem, but it is not the only one. Book I, or the Legend of Holiness, is patterned on the quest of the Christian Redcrosse Knight to achieve salvation through redemption from sin. Such redemption is first made possible through Arthur, or the instrument of divine grace, who must rescue Redcrosse from Orgoglio's dungeon of spiritual pride; then, after a purgative period in the House of Holiness, Redcrosse himself is able to bring about the defeat of the dragon and restore Una's parents to their kingdom, as Arthur had similarly restored Redcrosse earlier to the path of righteousness. The abundance of Biblical imagery and the structure of the spiritual quest in Book I suggest a typological focus for this section of the poem, as numerous interpreters have pointed out: A.C. Hamilton, for example, has noted that Arthur's rescue of Redcrosse from Orgoglio's dungeon is made analogous by Spenser to Christ's harrowing of
hell; Northrop Frye has indicated that Redcrosse's quest as a whole is similar to the quest of Christ to overcome the world, harrow hell, and restore Eden to mankind. In this context the historical associations of Hercules and the Hydra are given further scope: Duessa's monster is not only slander and Rome but is also the beast of Revelation XIII; Arthur is not only nature but is also grace, to use Professor Woodhouse's terms; Hercules is not only the hero of magnificent action and the Tudor forebear but is also the typological symbol of Christ. At the same time, however, typological fulfillment has not been reached; though the Herculean Arthur is Christian, he is not Christ—Spenser does not extend himself to the position of Ronsard's *Hercule Chrestien*, and the vision of the New Jerusalem presents only a goal for which to strive.

The Redcrosse Knight was also a Herculean hero, as was Arthur. Reference to the Hydra does not appear in Redcrosse's or St. George's battle against the dragon, although the association between the dragon and the Hydra was available to the Renaissance in Barclay's translated *Life of the Glorious Martyr Saint George*, which as Professors Padelford and O'Connor have shown was a possible source for Spenser. Despite the antipathy of the English reformers to Saint and idol worship, the figure of Saint George as the patron of the Order of the Garter remained popular with Elizabeth and still retained its Christian associations.
But there is a Herculean analogue in Redcrosse's fight with the dragon that has political and typological connotations similar to those we have noted with the Herculean Arthur and the Hydra. The dragon bellows forth a "flake of fire" that causes Redcrosse to writhe in pain; he is seared by spiritual pride as Hercules was poisoned through his acceptance of Iole as a concubine, and the agony is equally severe:

Not that great Champion of the antique world,
Whom famous Poetes verse so much doth vaunt,
And hath for twelue huge labours high extold,
So many furies and sharpe fits did haunt,
When him the poysoned garment did enchaunt
With Centaures bloud, and bloudie verses charm'd,
As did this knight twelue thousand dolours daunt
Whom fyrie steele now burnt, that earst him arm'd
That erst him goodly arm'd, now most of all him harm'd.
(I.xi.27).

The Herculean contrast with Arthur's previous battle against Duessa's Hydra seems clear: Herculean Arthur had been able to conquer the Hydra with his shield of diamond purity and repentant faith; Herculean Redcrosse, though instructed at the House of Holiness and inspired by the vision of New Jerusalem, does not yet possess Arthur's humility and redemptive grace. Redcrosse's armor is the armor of the virtuous hero, but even such valor can be corrupted by spiritual pride and human fallibility, evident in Hercules' eventual downfall and in Redcrosse's despairing realization here of his own inadequacy. The armor of Herculean valor is not enough; the baptismal fount of the Well of Life and the balm
of the Fortunate Fall, symbolized by the Tree of Life, are both necessary for Redcrosse's complete victory over the dragon.

In Book I of *The Faerie Queene* the Herculean associations with Arthur and Redcrosse help to focus attention on the political and typological layers of meaning inherent in the narrative action of the quest. Both Arthur and Redcrosse are Herculean prototypes of the heroic virtue embodied in the Tudors, a virtue that will bring about victory over the Hydra monster of the Papacy. But the Herculean hero must be typologically fulfilled through redemptive grace: Arthur is not only Hercules but is also Christian grace; Redcrosse is the Herculean hero who must rise beyond the limit of heroic valor through purgatorial suffering and Christian redemptive transcendence. Redcrosse, in his combat with the dragon, must come close to losing his life in Herculean agony before his soul can be won through Christian redemption.

In Book II of *The Faerie Queene* Spenser continues to link Hercules with the central heroic figures of the poem, in this case Arthur and Guyon. Professor Frank Kermode has recently suggested that Guyon's voluntary stay at the Cave of Mammon in Canto VII is analogous to Hercules' initiatory rites undergone to enter into the Eleusinian mysteries. Guyon, like Hercules, prepares himself for the role of the virtuous active hero by undergoing initiatory temptations that recall Christ's temptations
in the desert. Professor Kermode's references to the Eleusinian mysteries and his awareness of Spenser's affinity with Neo-Platonism and the occult are pertinent here, but further qualifications are necessary. As Maurice Evans has pointed out, Guyon in this episode suffers from intemperate pride. Approaching Mammon with a sense of self-sufficiency and arrogant confidence as he "euermore himselfe with comfort feedes, / Of his owne vertues, and prayse-worthy deedes" (II.vii.2), Guyon has the restricted vision of the man of nature; he contemptuously rejects Mammon but has no alternative vision that can provide spiritual sustenance. There are parallels here between Redcrosse and Sir Guyon, as there are throughout Books I and II: Both knights suffer from spiritual pride, both must be rescued eventually by Arthur or by divine grace, and both must be given visions of spiritual reality. Yet despite this parallel structure there is a significant contrast between the theological orientation of Book I with its emphasis on typology and faith and the Homeric struggles of Book II with their emphases on activism and reason. Book I posits a redemptive scheme of salvation through faith and a vision of the ultimate New Jerusalem; Book II presents the struggle of man to achieve this end through the guidance of reason and natural virtue.

Book II of the *Faerie Queene*, then, has similarities with Book I, but the typological focus of Book I has been
replaced by a focus on human nature and the control of the passions by the rational will. In this context, Guyon is more appropriately a figure of Hercules than Redcrosse, for Guyon embodies heroic virtue and self-mastery whereas Redcrosse only puts on the armor of Hercules to lose it. In the Cave of Mammon Guyon can rightly be seen as an Eleusinian initiate, but his self-sufficiency is not to be construed as Christian valor. Hercules can be a figura of Christ, but Spenser does not totally equate Hercules with Christ. Guyon passes through the Cave of Mammon, but he thereupon faints and requires angelic sustenance and the intervention of Arthur.

If we accept Professor Kermode's suggestion that Guyon is Hercules in the Cave of Mammon, it is interesting to note further Spenser's description of the imposing tree under which the Eleusinian initiate can sit in the Garden of Proserpina. The tree's branches are laden with fruit comparable to that in the Garden of the Hesperides:

Their fruit were golden apples glistening bright,  
That goodly was their glory to behold,  
On earth like neuer grew, ne living wight  
Like euer saw, but they from hence were sold;  
For those, which Hercules with conquest bold  
Got from great Atlas daughters, hence began,  
And planted there, did bring forth fruit of gold:  
And those with which th'Euboan young man wan  
Swift Atalanta, when through craft he her out ran.  

(II.vii.54)

The Herculean Guyon, we are told, "much wondred at this tree" (II.vii.56). Rightly so, for the apples of the
Hesperides were commonly interpreted as symbols of wealth that could either promote virtuous acts or bring about the downfall of the intemperate. Guyon is here presented with a temptation and a Choice that causes him to waver; he realizes his appetite and urge for rest and his "vitall powres gan wexe both weake and wan" (II.vii.65). A prompt rejection of Mammon's temptation is no longer possible, for Guyon here faces a reward couched in appropriate Herculean terms. Guyon can neither reject Mammon's guile nor accept his own fallibility—he must be escorted out of Mammon's domain to swoon in "deadly fit opprest."

Guyon here needs the transcendent vision and grace of the nurturing angel and of Arthur, as Canto VIII reveals. Like Redcrosse, Guyon must reach beyond his Herculean heroism and moral virtue and must be purged of spiritual pride. He is a Herculean initiate, but his purgative period has not ended by sidestepping Mammon's last temptation through refusing to reply to him and being led from the Cave. As C.R. Sonn has pointed out, the angel of Neo-Platonic love must come to nurture Guyon in his coma and thereby reveal God's mercy, and Arthur must come to reveal God's grace. The Palmer, finally, must return to Guyon to provide rational insight and the persuasive power of his staff, formed from the wood of Mercury's (or Hercules Gallicus') caduceus (II.xii.41). Only
after the entrance of all these figures does Guyon awaken and move on to be tutored in the Castle of Alma and to bring about the destruction of the Bower of Bliss. Whereas Guyon was unable to confront Mammon directly in the Garden of Proserpina, with the Palmer's help he can demolish Acrasia's Bower with relative ease.

But antecedent to Guyon's mastery over Acrasia there must be the preparatory tutelage in the Castle of Alma. Here we note Guyon and Arthur reading, respectively, the roll of Elfin Emperours and the chronicle of British kings. Miss Rathborne has convincingly argued that in Guyon's Elfin Emperours the figure of Elfinan, "who layd / Cleopopolis foundation first of all" (II.x.72), can be equated with the Libyan Hercules of the Berosus chronicle. That is, Elfinan or Hercules is both the ancestor and prototype of Prince Arthur and the Tudor monarchy; the Elfin Chronicle ends with the succession of Gloriana or Elizabeth to the Elfin throne. Meanwhile Arthur has been reading the chronicle of British kings, beginning with the original savage giants inhabiting the island before Brutus and ending with Uther Pendragon, Arthur's own father. In the earliest sections of the chronicle Spenser is cautiously skeptical: Albion was so named for its white coastal rocks (II.ix.6); the tale of the daughters of Dioclesian is false (II.ix.8); and yet the race of giants that Brutus subdued includes Godmer the "huge sonne of hideous Albion, / Whose father Hercules in France did quell" (II.ix.11).
The two chronicles are complementary, as are the two heroes Guyon and Arthur. Whereas Guyon's Elfin chronicle is an appropriate heroic stimulant for the fairy hero by recalling the Faerie Queene Gloriana for whom Guyon and the other fairy knights were striving, as Spenser had indicated in his letter to Ralegh, the British chronicle ends to face Arthur with his own task as the embodiment of British dynastic pride. Two threads of the narrative are revealed side by side in the two chronicles: the quest of the fairy knight for the praise of Gloriana, and the quest of the British knight for heroic endeavor and eventual fulfillment through union with the Faerie Queene. Moreover, these threads are interwoven: Gloriana is a figure for Queen Elizabeth; Hercules appears in both chronicles and, as we have already seen, is associated with both Guyon and Arthur in other episodes. The most obvious difference between the two chronicles is their temporal vision: The Elfin chronicle culminates in Gloriana's present reign, whereas the British chronicle ends abruptly with the past succession of Uther Pendragon. The difference is appropriate, however, and helps to distinguish the character of the respective heroes: Guyon the man of natural virtue needs the inspiration and guidance of a continuity of Elfin Emperours that points toward present realization in his Queen, Gloriana; Arthur the knight of both natural and spiritual valor can rely more on his own inner strength that his past has helped to develop.
The relationship between Guyon and Arthur is further suggested by the poet's choice of Arthur to remain behind at the Castle of Alma in Canto XI and fight off the enemies of temperance, while Guyon and the Palmer leave immediately for Acrasia's Bower. Arthur's struggle against Maleger and his forces is the struggle of the spirit against the intemperate lusts and diseases of the flesh, and it is significant that Arthur becomes the protector of Alma (the soul) and not Guyon. For Arthur, as earlier in Canto VIII, is closer to divine grace than is Guyon; Arthur is a more formidable opponent to the wily Maleger, whose illusory presence requires more spiritual strength than Guyon had evidenced in the Cave of Mammon. Yet even Arthur needs divine aid. The battle between Arthur and Maleger is analogous to the redeemed Redcrosse's conquest of Una's dragon at the end of Book I, with interesting Herculean parallels.

As Arthur leaves the Castle of Alma we see him mounted in armed might on a Herculean steed, comparable to the horses that Laomedon promised to Hercules for the rescue of his daughter Hesione. On such a mount Arthur is at first invincible against Maleger's followers:

And under neath him his courageous steed,
The fierce Spumador trode them downe like docks,
The fierce Spumador borne of heauenly seed:
Such as Laomedon of Phoebus race did breed.

(II.xi.19)
At the entrance of Maleger and his two Hags Impotence and Impatience, however, Arthur's armor and Herculean steed appear useless. Maleger embodies an intemperance that is universal and cannot be conquered by heroic arms alone. He is original sin, monstrous in stature but "of such subtile substance and vnsound, / That like a ghost he seem'd, 189 whose graueclothes were vnbound" (II.xi.20). This universal presence takes monstrous shape but is beyond conquest by human heroic effort of the sword--wounds appear bloodless and Maleger seems a demonic supernatural force.

Then, when Arthur dismounts from his Herculean steed, he is thrown to the ground by the Hags and divine grace in the form of the Squire must intercede. As Redcrosse needed the Well of Life after the flame of the dragon had reached him in his Herculean armor, so Arthur needs divine aid after his Herculean horse proves ineffectual. Returning to battle, Arthur relinquishes his weapons entirely and attempts to wrestle Maleger to the ground. Maleger rises up replenished from the earth each time Arthur attacks, and Arthur finally realizes that Maleger is actually a son of Earth like Antaeus:

He then remembred well, that had bene sayd
How th'Earth his mother was, and first him bore;
She eke so often, as his life decayd
Did life with vsury to him restore
And raysd him vp much stronger then before,
So soone as he vnto her wombe did fall. (II.xi.45)
Arthur, like Hercules, crushes Maleger to death in the air and deposits the corpse in a nearby lake (II.xi.46). Hercules' labor against Antaeus is quite appropriate in this context, for the myth was usually interpreted as the conquest of the spirit over the flesh, but the Herculean Arthur has typological overtones here that recall the Arthur and also Redcrosse of Book I. Maleger is concupiscence, but he is also original sin and the shadow of mortality and death; he is the apocalyptic monster that both Arthur and Redcrosse were battling in Book I.

It is noteworthy that the name Guyon, among other meanings, could etymologically derive from gynon, or wrestling, and that St. George could mean a holy wrestler, for Guyon's earlier wrestling scene against Furor (II. iv.6-8, 14) foreshadows Arthur's success here with Maleger, and Arthur's Herculean struggle has parallels with Redcrosse's fight against Una's dragon. Redcrosse, Arthur, and Guyon mirror each other's deeds in a complex pattern of correspondences, with the figure of Hercules providing a nexus among them all. Indeed, Books I and II of the Faerie Queene, the Legends of Holiness and Temperance, are constructed on an elaborate scale of contrasts within parallels, with the Hercules myth playing a significant part in the framework of each book. In Book I Hercules is seen within the typological context of the narrative action, within the quest for Christian fulfillment—Hercules here plays a part he had taken throughout
the Middle Ages. In Book II Hercules is more closely associated with the hero as he struggles to master his own passions—the myth is thus adaptable to a situation more secular in tone, more Renaissance in character. But the distinction between the quest for Christian redemption and the quest for self-control is a matter of degree. Hercules as both a Christian figura and a symbol of heroic virtue can serve in both contexts and in both Books to indicate the interrelated qualities of each of the central heroes.

The Herculean Arthur, moreover, is to reappear later in Book V, the Legend of Justice, to recall the central struggles of Book I and thereby give Spenser's poem somewhat of a circular framework. In Canto VIII of Book V, following the vision of imperial Concord in the Isis Church, Prince Arthur is reintroduced in the narrative and both Artegall and Arthur journey toward the Castle of Mercilla for the trial and judgment of Duessa. In Book I Duessa and her Hydra monster had symbolized papal Catholicism, and in these last cantos of Book V we note a return to the topical motifs of Books I and II. Arthur is now the Herculean hero of Justice bringing about the destruction of the monsters of Catholicism, and most of these monsters are in fact related to the Hydra of Book I, including the Blatant Beast that is to become a central evil in Book VI.

Arthur's first Herculean act in Book V is to conquer the Souldan, compared to the Diomedes who was finally "torne in
peeces by *Alcides* great" (V.viii.31). As with Arthur's first Herculean feat in Book I, the Prince overcomes his opponent by blinding him with his diamond shield. Here the Souldan's horses flee in terror from Arthur's shield, the chariot topples, and the Souldan like Diomedes is "Torne all to rags, and rent with many a wound, / That no whole peec of him was to be seen." (V.viii.42). This episode with the Souldan and his horses, which has been interpreted as the 1588 defeat of the Spanish Armada, leads eventually to the downfall of Malengin or guile and sets the stage for the trial of Duessa in Canto IX. Thus in the trial at Mercilla's palace we note that Duessa is stated to have "wrought great care, / And mickle mischiefe vnto many a knight, / By her beguyled" (V.ix.40). Duessa (Mary, Queen of Scots), who "practiz'd how for to depryue / Mercilla of her crowne" (V.ix.41), is condemned by a chorus of voices including those of Authority, Justice, and Religion. As Arthur had overthrown the Souldan so must Elizabeth in turn condemn Mary, though not without tears of mercy.

Following the trial of Duessa Arthur undertakes a second Herculean labor against Geryoneo, the son of Geryon. The Geryon myth had been presented earlier in Book IV in terms of Concord, but here the topical focus is evident: Geryon is described chiefly as a Spanish tyrant whose cattle of "purple hew" are guarded by a cowheard
and his two headed dog Orthrus, the demonic dog "begotten by great Typhaon, / And foule Echidna, in the house of night" (V.x.10). After his death under Hercules' club the son Geryoneo, possessed of three bodies in one like his father, has fled to the land of Belge: The topical reference to Spain's intervention in Flanders and England's struggles there against the Catholics points again to the Herculean Arthur as a Protestant hero. Arthur kills Geryoneo and then turns to Geryoneo's monster idol, the "image of his monstrous parent Geryone" (V.x.13), that Geryoneo has placed in a nearby church and has sacrificed to with daily burnt offerings. The monster as Spenser describes it is related to Geryon's two headed dog Orthrus:

\[
\text{Horrible, hideous, and of hellish race,} \\
\text{Borne of the brooding of Echidna base.} \\
\text{Or other like infernall furies kinde . . .} \\
\text{(V.xi.23)}
\]

It is the Sphinx, "like to an hellish feend," that attacks Arthur by attempting to tear away his shield and uttering "blasphemous speaches" (V.xi.27-8). Arthur finally wounds it fatally and it falls to earth:

\[
\text{Breathing out clouds of sulphure fowle and blacke,} \\
\text{In which a puddle of contagion was,} \\
\text{More loathed then Lerna, or then Stygian lake . . .} \\
\text{(V.xi.32)}
\]

The allusion here to the Lernean lake and the blasphemy of the monster recall Duessa's seven headed Hydra of Book I, which Arthur also conquered. But the stress here on the
The Faerie Queene draws attention both to Arthur's nature and grace, both to his chivalric valor and virtue and to his Christian stature as an instrument of divine grace. Professor Merritt Hughes has suggested, on the basis of the Herculean links with Arthur in the poem, that Spenser saw Hercules and his labors as the epitome of heroic endeavor and imperial strength and that the poet would probably have drawn upon further Herculean labors for Arthur in later Books of the epic. What Spenser would have written in later Books, if indeed he would have written any more at all, is of course, conjectural, but the Herculean Arthur that we have here, together with his Herculean associates
Redcrosse and Guyon, does indicate Spenser's interest in the myth and its euhemeristic, typological, and moral interpretations. Hercules, as he was for Sidney in both the **Defense** and the **Arcadia**, is recognized and utilized by Spenser as a symbolic figure of virtuous heroism to which the poet's central heroes can be gloriously compared.

The Hercules myth plays other roles in Spenser's poem, however, that reveal Spenser not only calling upon the medieval traditions of typology and moral allegory but also treating Hercules in terms of Concord and Divine Love that echo the Italian Neo-Platonists and establish Spenser as a poet of the Renaissance. In Books III and IV of **The Faerie Queene**, and finally in Book V, Hercules is seen not only as a martial hero but also as a mythic symbol of Concord—Spenser interfuses the interpretative traditions to such an extent that the Hercules figure is essentially recreated in the alembic of his imagination; Hercules thus serves to focus attention on the central pattern of discordia concors that underlies the structure of the poem as a whole.

In Books III and IV of **The Faerie Queene** Hercules does not play a dominant role, though the appearances of the myth are consistently appropriate within their context and help to emphasize the central aspects of love and concord that reverberate in Neo-Platonic terms throughout
the twin legends of Chastity and Friendship. We first note reference to the Hercules myth in the description of the tapestries hanging in the House of Busyrane. Here Jove's metamorphoses to bring about his deeds of rape and lust are depicted, paralleled by Cupid's reign of disorder while Jove has left his throne. Jove's bestial metamorphoses bring calamitous results, but the union with Alcmena is seen as more propitious:

But Faire Alcmena better match did make,
Ioying his loue in likenesse more entire;
Three nights in one, they say that for her sake
He then did put, her pleasures lenger for partake.

(III.xi.33)

Here Spenser appears to approve Jove's union that brought about the birth of Hercules. The relevance of this allusion in the context of the Busyrane tapestries is not readily apparent, for the reference is undeniably affirmative in tone. We note elsewhere in Spenser's poetry that Jove's night of love with Alcmena is presented in a favorable Neo-Platonic context. In the Mother Hubberds Tale Jove sends Mercury to the forest to learn of the lack of rule in the lion's kingdom. To quell disorder Mercury carries his caduceus, the familiar symbol of Concord that can bring about the sleep of peace and harmony:

He tooke Caduceus his snakie wand,
With which the damned ghosts he gouerneth,
And furies rules, and Tartare tempereth.
With that he causeth sleep to seize the eyes, 
And feare the harts of all his enemyes; 
And when him list, an unuersall night 
Throughout the world he makes on euerie wight; 
As when his Syre with Alcumenay lay. (ll. 1292-9)

The last line here recalls the correspondence between 
Mercury and Hercules Gallicus and presents Jove's love 
union with Alcmena as an epitome of harmony and Concord. 
The link between god and man can be symbolically repre-
sented in Jove's love for Alcmena: Divine Love, as we 
have seen in Leone, emanates downward to woman to produce 
in mystical sexual union the heroic Hercules, the demi-god, 
who in turn as Hercules Gallicus can bring about universal 
harmony. In the Christian terms of Ronsard's Hercule Chrestien the Virgin birth produces the Herculean Christ, 
the Man-God, who shall save the world. These Christian 
and Neo-Platonic associations lie behind Spenser's later 
Epithalamion. Here the poet welcomes the coming of night, 
the night of nuptial love, of fruition, when Love's 
harmony reigns:

Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
The safety of our joy:
But let the night be calme and quietsome,
Without tempestuous storms or sad aferay:
Lyke as when Ioue with fayre Alcmena lay,
When he begot the great Tirynthian groome:
Or lyke as when he with thy selfe did lie,
And begot Maiesty. (ll. 324-31)

To place Jove's union with Alcmena in a description of 
the Busyrane tapestris thus seems paradoxical indeed. But
the viewer of these tapestries is Britomart, the figure of chastity, and Busyrane is equivalent to Busiris, the evil Egyptian king who killed strangers as sacrifices to Osiris. The hero who destroyed Busiris, of course, was Hercules, and in Spenser's poem Britomart is able to overpower Busyrane and rescue Amoret. Is Britomart then a Herceulan figure, and does the mention of the birth of Hercules in the description of the tapestries appropriately foreshadow Britomart's arrival as a symbol of chaste concord to bring an end to Busyrane's deceit? The connection of the female Britomart with the male Hercules is implicit and indirect, but it is nonetheless clear. It indicates further Spenser's more complex approach to the myth in these later Books of The Faerie Queene.

Britomart, as both Kathleen Williams and Maurice Evans point out, is the popular Neo-Platonic figure of the Venus Armata, the union of Mars and Venus in a harmonic relation of concordia discors. Armed as a knight, she symbolizes Concord through the reconciliation of opposites; in Britomart masculinity and femininity are fused, so that she can look fondly on the reunion of Scudamour and Amoret in the original ending to Book III as they lock in embrace like a "faire Hermaphrodite." Moreover, Britomart is the central figure of the Legend of Chastitie, and as in Peele's The Praise of Chastity Hercules could be interpreted as symbolic of chastity and virtue. Queen
Elizabeth provides a nexus for all of these correspondences: Peele's poem presented an appropriate title and topic in the reign of the Virgin Queen; Hercules was associated with Queen Elizabeth in various contexts; and Elizabeth is linked inextricably with Britomart in The Faerie Queene when Merlin foretells the future history of Britain, from the fruitful union of Britomart and Artegaill to the reign of the "royall virgin" (III.iii.26-50). Britomart is associated with Hercules through these correspondences with chastity and with the Queen, but she is also Herculean through her eventual union with Artegaill, the knight of Justice and the descendant of the Libyan Hercules in Book V. For Britomart's chastity is not exclusive and celibate; her concord reaches beyond her person to include her complementary sexual mate in the chaste virtue of harmonious marriage, revealed in Book V in Britomart's dream in the Isis Church (V.vii.13-6, 21-3). The poet's recall of Hercules' birth as Britomart gazes at the Busyrane tapestries is appropriate, for it calls forth Britomart's Herculean destruction of Busiris-Busyrane.

After Britomart passes beyond the Busyrane tapestries she is eventually confronted by the Mask of Cupid; the first masker to appear is Fancy, and we note once more the implicit appeal to Britomart in the poet's recall of Hercules' loss of Hylas:

The first was Fancy, like a louely boy,
Of rare aspect, and beautie without peare;
Matchable either to that Olympian of Troy
Whom Ioue did loue, and chose his cup to beare,
Or that same daintie lad, which was so deare
To great Alcides, that when as he dyde,
He wailed womanlike with many a teare,
And euery wood, and euery valley wyde
He fild with Hylas name; the Nymphes eke Hylas
cryde. (III.xii.7)

At the end of the masker's procession we see Amoret with
"deathes owne image figured in her face" (III.xii.19), her
bleeding heart pulsating faintly before her in a silver basin. If Britomart is playing a Herculean role in the
house of Busyrane, the comparison of the first masker
Fancy to Hylas would be particularly apt, for Amoret is
here close to death because of her enslavement by Cupid's
forces, of which the first is Fancy. The maskers are
embodiments of traditional Renaissance sonnet metaphors, 198
as Professor Roche has shown, yet in their order of
appearance they present the progression of love from
Fancy and Desire to Griefe and Fury and thence ultimately
to "Death with infamie" (III.xii.25). Fancy as dead
Hylas therefore adumbrates and encloses the whole pro-
gression of love and Cupid's mask and suggests to Brito-
mart from the start of the mask what could be the ultimate
end of Amoret. At Amoret's death we might certainly expect
the Herculean Britomart to wail "womanlike with many a
tear"--the image of Hercules in tears is an appropriate
warning to Britomart of the debilitating dangers of Busyrane's
domain where Amoret could become Cupid's sacrificial
victim and where Britomart herself could be brought to weakness and despair.

Book III ends, however, with the destruction of the House of Busyrane and, in the original version, the hermaphroditic union of Scudamour and Amoret. Harmonious love is for Spenser an image of discordia concors, of mutual respect and affection between the male and female partners interlocked within the circle of love's embrace. Chaste Britomart, who as Venus Armata is a symbol of Concord, must eventually unite with Artegaill in a marriage of harmony that will rise beyond the sexual warfare of Book III and will extend the scope of the allegorical narrative to cosmic proportions, much as the vision of the New Jerusalem had done in typological terms in Book I.

Hermaphroditism, mutability, discord—all of these seemingly antagonistic forces can be harmonized in Spenser's Neo-Platonic vision of human Concord and Divine Love. In Book III the Garden of Adonis, "eterne in mutabilitie" (III.vi.47), foreshadows the Concord of the Temple of Venus in Book IV, when Venus herself is seen as a hermaphrodite. The Hercules references in the House of Busyrane are directed to Britomart, but as with Britomart herself the allusions to the myth are increasingly ambivalent: Hercules is not only the typological and classical hero of Books I and II, but he now resembles the figure of chastity and of Concord in his affinities with Britomart. Though
Hercules' appearances in Book III are in a context of discord, the myth suggests a Concord into which these discords can be eventually resolved.

The Legend of Chastitie leads to Book IV, the Legend of Friendship or social Concord, and we find the figure of Hercules appearing correspondingly to suggest and amplify a context of social and cosmic harmony. Already in Canto I we note mention of Hercules in the description of the broken relics in the House of Ate, "mother of debate, / And all dissention" (IV.1.19). The relics, which portray "the sad effects of discord" in numerous guises, include the golden apple of the Judgment of Paris and the remains of the revolt of the Centaurs at the marriage feast of Pirithous:

And there the relics of the drunken fray,
The which amongst the Lapithees befell,
And of the bloody feast, which sent away
So many Centaures drunken soules to hell,
That vnder great Alcidae furie fell . . .

(IV.1.23)

Hercules in his wrath and divine madness thus brings destruction to those who would defile the social harmony of the marriage feast, much as Britomart had destroyed Busyrane after the Mask of Cupid, which as Spenser reminds us at the beginning of Book IV happened on Amoret's wedding day amidst similar drunken revelry:

The very selfe same day that she was wedded,
Amidst the bidale feast, whilst every man
Surcharg'd with wine, were heedlesse and ill hedded
All bent to mirth before the bride was bedded . . .
(IV.i.3)

The Legend of Friendship, as the heading of Book IV states, is the legend of Cambell and Telamond, and here too in Cambell's struggle against the three sons of Agape we find suggestions of Hercules as a symbolic figure of Concord. Agape's three sons--Priamond, Diamond, and Triamond--are triplets whose complementary attributes and harmonious relationship are presented by Spenser in obvious Neo-Platonic terms:

These three did loue each other dearely well,
And with so firme affection were allyde,
As if but one soule in them all did dwell,
Which did her powre into three parts diuyde . . .
(IV.ii.43)

The three Fates have decreed that these three brothers would be further united in that at the death of one the vitality of the remaining brothers would be proportionately increased. They live in concord, and "now t'increase affection naturall, / In loue of Canacee they ioyned all" (IV.ii.54). The brothers, of course, are analogous to the three headed figure of Geryon: In Alciati's Emblemata we find, under an emblem entitled "Concordia insuperabilis," a picture of the three headed Geryon and accompanying verses that explain Geryon as a symbol of Concord, a union of three in one, who is invincible as long as his heads are united. Thomas Thomas' academic collection of
interpretations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* includes a lengthy discussion of Geryon: Besides being euhemeristically a Spanish ruler, he represents one of three brothers who reigned over three islands, "quas cum fratribus concors tenuit. Erant enim (ut Iustinus scribit) tres fratres tanta inter se concordia, ut esset una & eadem eorum voluntas." Moreover, notes Thomas, Geryon has been interpreted as the three parts of the soul, which is really three souls in one: the corporeal or vegetative soul, the sensual soul, and the rational soul, which is more powerful than the others and rules over them in harmony.

Cambell, who as the brother of Canacee has offered a challenge to the three sons of Agape, fights them in true Herculean fashion. First Priamond is killed by having his windpipe cut (IV.iii.12), then Diamond's head is severed off his trunk (IV.iii.20), and finally Triamond falls with his throat pierced (IV.iii.30)—the three heads of Geryon have been destroyed. Triamond, however, now possesses the vital spirits of his dead brothers and must be killed thrice before Cambell can claim victory. Once more Triamond falls to earth under Cambell's sword, but before the third death can be accomplished there appears in a lion-drawn chariot the figure of Cambina, symbol of Concord and, as Maurice Evans suggests, of *Venus Urania*, carrying in her right hand Mercury's caduceus and in her left a cup of soothing Nepenthe:
In her right hand a rod of peace shee bore,  
About the which two Serpents were wound,  
Entrayled mutually in louely lore,  
And by the tailes together firmely bound,  
And both were with one ollue garland crowned,  
Like to the rod which Maias sonne doth wield,  
Wherewith the hellish fiends he doth confound.  
And in her other hand a cup she hild,  
The which was with Nepenthe to the brim vpfield.  
(IV.iii.42)

The caduceus is of course Mercury's wand and is comparable to the club of Hercules Gallicus that Chapman portrayed in the penultimate vision of Peace in The Teares of Peace. As Spenser noted at the beginning of Canto II, the fury of discord can only be ended by "a God or godlike man":

Such as was Orpheus, that when strife was growen  
Amongst those famous ympes of Greece, did take  
His siluer Harpe in hand, and shortly friends them make. (IV.ii.1)

Cambina thus appears here not only as the figure of Concord but also as Divine Love, the ideal of Heavenly Concord that transcends human passions and gives men a glimpse of the Divine. Cambina touches the combatants with her wand and offers them a drink of Nepenthe, a drink that only famous worthies and heroes are allowed to receive (IV.iii.43-5). Immediately the warriors Triamond and Cambell are reconciled, and "Instead of strokes, each other kissed glad, . . . / And plighted hands for euer friends to be" (IV.iii.49). The Canto ends significantly with marriage and a joyous marriage feast:
Where making joyous feast theire daies they spent
In perfect loue, deuise of hateful strife,
Allide with bands of mutuall couplement;
For Triamond had Canacee to wife,
With whom he ledd a long and happie life;
And Cambel tooke Cambina to his fere,
The which:as life were each to other liefe.
So all alike did loue, and loued were,
That since their days such louers were not found
elsewhere. (IV.iii.52)

The marriage of Cambell and Cambina, of Hercules and
Mercury, is a symbolic portrait of the popular figure of
Hercules Gallicus, the Orphic persuader and leader of men
to reason and virtue. The marriage feast in turn is the
ritual of social harmony that had been parodied and de-
secrated in the Mask of Cupid and mocked in the relics of
the House of Ate; Hercules enters here as he had before
to quell the forces of discord and promote the harmony
of love. The Herculean symbolism is complex: In the
Cambell episode we find Hercules both as Cambell destroying
Geryon and also as Cambina bringing forth Concord—Spenser
draws the rich symbolic potential of the myth into the
narrative that itself constantly weaves and metamorphoses
before our eyes, presenting a vision that is itself
"eterne in mutabilitie."

What gives consistency and perceptible form to
Spenser's narrative, which appears in sinuous fashion
to contract into symbolic moments and then dilate along
the level of narrative action, is a progressive movement
toward a vision of Concord that is foreshadowed in the
Garden of Adonis in Book III and is reached in the Temple of Venus near the end of Book IV. In this context the Hercules figure embodies not only the virtuous effort of negatively destroying evil but also the positive vision of a transcendent harmonious good. And Spenser is not reductive in his technique: Hercules can have all of these symbolic associations simultaneously; he can be in himself a *discordia concors*. The marriage of the Herculean Cambell and Cambina is a foreshadowing of the eventual marriage of Artegall and Britomart, of the union of masculine and feminine qualities seen most explicitly in the hermaphroditic Venus statue in the Temple. It is the symbolic marriage of Love; Cartari's mythographic handbook thus discusses the statues of Cupid that were placed in the Roman academies between the statues of Mercury and of Hercules:

... la statue de Cupidon estoit au milieu des deux, pour le montrer vertueux & raisonnable: car Hercule denotoit la vertu, & Mercure, la raison. Athenee escript que les anciens Philosophes estoient Amour estre un Dieu fort graue, et esloigné de toute laideur, comme lon peut coignoistre par ce qu'ils mettoient la statue d'iceluy avec celles de Mercure & d'Hercule, l'vn pour l'eloquence, l'autre pour la vertu & force, de la compagnie desquels procede amitié & concorde.203

The next appearance of Hercules in Book IV is, appropriately enough, at the Temple of Venus. Here Scudamour, upon reaching the "second paradise" of the gardens surrounding the Temple, sees two groups of contented lovers: The first are the lovers who walk in pairs,
murmuring to each other of their true loves and centering their attention on their personal relationships (IV.x. 25-6). The second group, however, are motivated not only by personal passions but also by ideals of chastity and vertue that lead to the highest form of friendship and Concord. This second group of lovers:

... loued not as these, for like intent, But on chast vertue grounded their desire, Farre from all fraud, or fayned blandishment; Which in their spirits kindling zealous fire, Braue thoughts and noble deedes did euermore aspire.

Such were great Hercules, and Hylas deare; Trew Jonathan, and David trustie tryde; Stout Theseus, and Pirithous his feare; ...
All these and all that euer had bene tyde
In bands of friendship, there did liue for euer,
Whose liues although decay'd, yet loues decayed neuer. (IV.x.26-7)

An earlier reference to Hercules and Hylas, we recall, appeared in the Mask of Cupid. There in Busyrane's House Hercules wept bitterly over the death of Hylas; here at the Temple of Venus, however, Hercules and Hylas are united forever in a second Eden under the reign of Concord. Discord has become Concord; Scudamour tells us here of his successful wooing of Amoret, and the scene of fruitful love is a dramatic contrast to the painful Mask of Cupid in which the lovers were separated by Busyrane. Here in the gardens surrounding the Venus Temple nature and art are harmoniously reconciled. At the entrance to the Temple Concord herself appears, linking
the hands of the young men Love and Hate who stand on either side of her—a world of discordia concors prevails throughout the Temple and its grounds. Within the Temple Scadamour views the mysterious veiled statue of the hermaphroditic Venus, whose "feete and legs together twyned / Were with a snake, whose head and tail were fast com-
byned" (IV.x.40)—the image of the snake biting its own tail is of course a mystical symbol of the Divine Circle of harmony and Love, but it suggests also in its position about Venus' legs the caduceus of Mercury or Concord.

The last reference to Hercules in Book IV is again in a context of Concord and love's harmony, in the marriage feast to celebrate the nuptials of the rivers Thames and Medway. Here, however, we move closer to the poet's concern for historical allegory and the celebration of national ambitions, concerns that are to dominate Book V. Among the participants at the bridal banquet we note the procession of sea gods, including Neptune and his many sons who, as the Berosus chronicle had professed, were the founders of numerous nations. It is noteworthy that Spenser includes Albion here as the founder of the Britons, amplifying the brief mention of the Hercules-Albion battle that had appeared in Book II in the British chronicle. After the entrance of "mightie Albion, father of the bold / And warlike people, which the Britaine Islands hold" (IV.xi.15), Spenser stops to elaborate further:
For Albion the sonne of Neptune was,
Who for the proove of his great puissance,
Out of his Albion did on dry-foot pas
Into old Gall, that now is cleepeed France,
To fight with Hercules, that did advance
To vanquish all the world with matchlesse might,
And there his mortall part by great mischance
Was slaine; but that which is th'immortal spright
Lives still; and to this feast with Neptunes seed was
8ight. (IV.xi.16)

This account of Hercules and Albion is much more detailed
than the reference Arthur had noticed in the chronicle of
British kings. The elaboration here, in the context of
nuptial harmony, foreshadows the central thematic structure
of Book V, the Legend of Justice, in which the pattern of
discordia concors is presented not only in terms of personal
or social relationships but also on a level of political
order and national policy.

Order and disorder, love and friendship, all these
central motifs of Books III and IV reappear in Book V, but
the vision is shifted from the Temple of Venus to the Isis
Church and the palace of Mercilla. The marriage of the
Thames and Medway in itself is a glorification of England's
national stature, though at the same time these scenes
dramatize the vision of Concord through marriage and, at
the end of Book IV, of the Neo-Platonic Venus rising from
the sea as Florimell leaves the sea dungeon of Proteus to
be united with Marinell. In Book V the Herculean
Artegall does "advance / To vanquish all the world with
matchlesse might," but within the narrative progress of
of the action there echo the symbolic visions of Concord that have played so great a part in the Legends of Chastity and Friendship.

Spenser introduces Book V with a lament on the present iron age and a discussion of ArtegaII's heroic prototypes and his education by Astraea. Book IV had ended with the reunion of Marinell and Florimell and the suggestion of a forthcoming marriage, but Spenser here turns directly to the figure of ArtegaII and a general discussion of the lamentable state of the world, leaving the marriage of Marinell and Florimell until Canto III. ArtegaII, who had appeared earlier in Book III and IV as a heroic warrior and lover to Britomart, is here the champion of Justice, reared by Astraea and comparable to such heroes as Bacchus-Osiris and Hercules Libycus. Even during the golden age, Spenser notes, "the wicked seede of vice" began to flourish as rank weeds that required heroic gardeners:

But euermore some of the vertuous race
Rose vp, inspired with hercioke heat,
That cropt the branches of the sient base,
And with strong hand their fruitful rancknes did beface.

Such first was Bacchus, that with furious might
All th'East before vntam'd did ouerronne,
And wrong repressed, and establisht right,
Which lawlesse men had formerly fordone.
There Iustice first her princely rule begonne.
Next Hercules his like ensample shewed,
Who all the West with equall conquest wonne,
And monstrous tyrants with his club subdewed;
The club of Iustice dread, with kingly powre endewed.
And such was he, of whom I haue to tell,
The Champion of true Justice Artegall . . .

(V.i.1-3)

This Hercules, as Miss Rathborne has shown, is the Libyan Hercules of the Berosus chronicle, whose account of Hercules was available in numerous sources to Spenser, including Holinshed's Chronicle and Cartigney. The Libyan Hercules mentioned earlier as the slayer of Albion is thus a prototype of Artegall, the champion who will eventually bring about the return of Astraea or the reign of Justice to the fallen world. But this is also the Hercules who founded the Trojan line by his union with Galatea, and Artegall through his union with Britomart is the ancestor of Elizabeth. Spenser's approach to the Hercules myth here, though there are connotations of Concord and of the heroic Christian knight in the background, is primarily an euhemeristic one. It is the same focus noted in the earlier poem The Teares of the Muses, in which Bacchus, a common name for the Libyan Jove or Osiris, is similarly associated with Hercules. In that poem Calliope, the muse of heroic poetry, deifies euhemeristic heroes through verse:

Therefore the nurse of vertue I am hight,
And golden Trompet of eternitie,
That lowly thoughts lift vp to heauens hight,
And mortall men haue powre to deifie:
Bacchus and Hercules I raisd to heauen,
And Charlemaine, amongst the Starris seuen.

(11. 457-62)
Artegall, "sprong of seed terrestriall" (III.iii.26), is in the same heroic category as the euhemeristic Hercules, as Spenser tells us at the beginning of Canto II of Book V:

Nought is more honorable to a knight,  
Ne better doth beseeeme braue cheuairy,  
Then to defend the feeble in their rights,  
And wrong redresse in such as wend awry.  
Whilome those great Heroes got thereby  
Their greatest glory, for their rightfull deedes,  
And place deserved with the Gods on hy.  
Herein the noblesse of this knight exceedes,  
Who now to perils great for iustice sake proceedes.  
(V.ii.1)

Spenser's euhemeristic emphasis here, which places Artegall and Hercules in a historical framework, suggests in turn a focus on historical and topical allegory in Book V, a suggestion that scholars have not hesitated to follow in interpreting various episodes and their principal participants. Professor Greenlaw's conclusions are cautious enough and have been generally accepted: Artegall is usually Lord Grey, Radigund and Duessa are Mary Stuart, and Arthur's victory over the Souldan prophesies Elizabeth's victory over Philip of Spain. The Irish question certainly must have haunted Spenser's imagination, but Artegall is often associated with Hercules in Book V, and as we have seen Hercules was most prominently associated with Queen Elizabeth and with Robert Devereux, the second Earl of Essex. The Herculean Artegall, who would become the eventual husband of chaste Britomart, may be linked in Spenser's imagination
not only with Lord Grey but also with Essex. The reference to Hercules as a western hero at the beginning of Book V has been recently suggested as an allusion to the Earl of Essex by Professor Kuhl, and we note further Spenser’s Herculean allusion in the Prothalamion to Essex as the victor in the Cadiz expedition:

Great England's glory and the World's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name, late through all Spain did thunder,
And Hercules two pillars standing neere,
Did make to quake and feare:
Faire branch of Honor, flower of Cheualrie,
That fillest England with thy triumphs fame,
Joy haue thou of thy noble victorie,
And endless happinesse of thine owne name
That promiseth the same:
That through thy prowesse and victorious armes,
Thy country may be freed from foraine harmses;
And great Elisaes glorious name may ring
Through al the world, fil'd with thy wide Alarmes
Which some braue muse may sing
To ages following . . . (ll. 145-60)

The "braue muse" recalls the familiar passage in the sonnet to Essex at the publication of Books I-III of The Faerie Queene in 1590:

But when my Muse, whose fethers nothing flitt
Doe yet but flagg, and lowly learne to fly
With bolder wing shall dare alofte to sty
To the last praises of this Faery Queene,
Then shall it make more famous memory
Of thine Heroicke parts, such as they beene . . .
(ll. 7-12)

Essex's "Heroicke parts" would be suitably presented by the epitome of heroic endeavor, Hercules. It has been further suggested that Artegall's part in the Burbon episode in
Canto XI of Book V is an allegory of Essex's aid to the French Protestant king Henry IV, whose recantation of Protestantism in 1593 is shown by Sir Burbon's loss of the shield given by Redcrosse (V.xi.52-6). In short, the Libyan Hercules at the beginning of Book V and the Herculean aspects of Artegaill may refer not to Lord Grey but to Essex.

If this assertion is correct, the Artegaill-Radigund episodes may not refer only to Lord Grey's sympathy for Mary Stuart or to Spenser's criticism of Grey's opponents who would prefer that he be more lenient and "womanlike" with the Irish rebels. For the Herculean Artegaill must learn through suffering to become a suitable mate for Britomart; the enslavement to Radigund is a necessary purgation period that ends with Britomart's redemptive vision in the Isis Church and the release of Artegaill to continue his quest against Grantorto or the forces of Catholicism. Essex, that is, is patronized by Elizabeth to achieve higher goals than enslavement to woman's wiles. He must embody the ideals of England's imperial ambitions, the return of Astraea and universal empire symbolized by Plus Ultra on the pillars of Hercules. In Book V Artegaill is Lord Grey, but he need not be so in a restricted sense, as Professor Greenlaw admits: Artegaill, that is, can be both Grey and the Justice of Grey's policy, and we note that the Earl of Essex was a proponent, with Spenser,
of this more aggressive national policy against Spain and the Catholics, including Mary Tudor and the Irish rebels.

The enslavement of Artagall by Radigund and his rescue by Britomart have thus interesting topical overtones in Book V. But the topical allegory does not completely dominate either the narrative level of the action or exclude the symbolic associations that we have seen in Spenser's other Books. The Legend of Justice makes a shift in orientation that demands a similar shift in allegorical focus, so that we find considerable emphasis on political and national harmony through legal order and control. Political order and justice are another form of Concord, however, and Spenser continues to interweave his earlier symbolic motifs within the narrative structure. The Artagall-Radigund-Britomart episode has topical implications, but it is also developed within a contextual framework of Concord and discord that recalls the Neo-Platonic syncretism of Book IV.

The structure of the first seven cantos of Book V reveals this framework of Concord upon which Spenser builds the episodes of Artagall, Radigund, and Britomart. First, as we have noted, Artagall is presented as an exemplar of Justice, similar to the heroic Hercules. In Canto III we return to the narrative and symbolic focus of Book IV in the marriage festivities for Marinell and Florimell, in which Artagall acts as a judge and peacemaker to rescue Marinell in the tourney and to restore the girdle of
 chastity to Florimell. The beginning stanzas of Canto IV provide a transition between the marriage festival and Artegall's future labors by reminding us of the prime duties of a knight of Justice, who must "master wrong and puissant pride" by wielding the power of authority with "dreadlesse might":

Therefore whylome to knights of great emprise
   The charge of Justice giuen was in trust,
   That they might execute her judgements wise,
   And with their might beat downe licentious lust,
   Which proudly did impugne her sentence just.
   Whereof no brauer president this day
   Remaines on earth, preseru'd from yron rust
   Of rude oblivion, and long times decay,
   Then this of Artegall, which here we haue to say.
   (V.iv.2)

The emphases in this stanza are significant: The knight of Justice must attack sensual lawlessness and desire, which in arrogance challenges the laws of justice; he must bring Concord to the social and political spheres. Moreover, Artegall is a hero comparable to those of the golden age, even though the modern day is one of "yron rust." Artegall, that is, is the Herculean hero of virtuous action and Concord placed in a context of political and social Justice.

Yet Artegall has not yet reached full Herculean stature. In Canto IV he and Talus rescue Sir Terpine from a group of Amazons and are told of their leader Radigund and her foul treatment of knights within her power:

   First she doth them of warlike armes despoile,
   And cloth in womens weedes: And then with threat
Doth them compell to worke, to earne their meat,
To spin, to card, to sew, to wash, to wring . . .
(V.iv.31)

This portrait of Radigund's effeminate slaves brings to
mind the picture of Hercules under the power of Iole or
Omphale, and Artega\.ll is soon to suffer similar ignominy.
Artega\.ll is the knight of Justice, but at this point in
Canto IV he is still intemperate and comparable to his
unfeeling iron man Talus: seeing himself as a figure of
vengeance and wrath (V.iv.34), Artega\.ll rushes into battle
against Radigund and her forces and is momentarily success-
ful. On the second day, however, Radigund appears for single
combat, carrying a shield embossed with jewels that:

\[
\ldots \text{shined wide,} \\
\text{As the faire Moone in her most full aspect,} \\
\text{That to the Moone it mote be like in each respect.} \\
(V.v.3)
\]

Artega\.ll successfully disarms Radigund of her shield of
seeming chastity, but upon seeing her face is again con-
fronted with what appears to be the chastity of the Moon:
Her face, "bath'd in bloud and sweat together," reveals a
beauty "Like as the Moone in foggie winters nights, / Doth
seeme to be her selfe, though darkned be her light"
(V.v.12). Spenser's emphasis here on "seeme" is significant,
for Radigund epitomizes woman's guile and the treacherous
snares of lust, but for Artega\.ll the fallen Radigund is a
vision similar to the fallen Britomart of Book IV (IV.vi.19-20)
Artegall turns from intemperate vengeance to intemperate pity; Justice is tempted, and Artegall flings away his sword and voluntarily yields. Radigund dresses the knight in women's clothing, breaks his sword, reveals other knights spinning thread, and places him in their midst in a pose similar to Hercules:

Amongst them all she placed him most low,
    And in his hand a distaffe to him gave,
    That he thereon should spin both flax and tow;
A sordid office for a mind so brave.
    So hard it is to be a woman's slave.
Yet he it took in his own self's despight,
    And thereto did himselfe right well behaue,
    Her to obey, sith he his faith had plight,
    Her vassall to become, if she him wonne in fight.

Who had him seene, imagine mote thereby,
That whylome hath of Hercules bene told,
    How for Iolus sake he did apply
His mightie hands, the distaffe vile to hold,
    For his huge club, which had subdued of old
So many monsters, which the world annoyed;
    His Lyons skin chaunged to a pall of gold,
In which forgetting warres, he onely joyed
In combats of sweet loue, and with his mistresse toyed. (V.v.23-4)

A Herculean analogy is appropriate for Artegall, both in this particular context and also in conjunction with Artegall's associations with Hercules elsewhere, but it is important to note that Artegall has here accepted his subjection because of a vow made on the battlefield. In the satiric tradition Hercules had fallen to lust and idleness, a regrettable situation for a virtuous hero. In Spenser's account Artegall has had pity for Radigund and had glumly accepted his fate without any enthusiasm whatsoever.
Artegall has not "joyed in combats of sweet loue," though Radigund and then Clarinda do their best to encourage him. Spenser's application of the Hercules myth to Artegall's predicament is thus not quite within the satiric tradition insofar as the Herculean Artegall is concerned; with the Iole-Omphale figure of Radigund, however, we have the familiar emphasis on women's lust and deceit, seen here in terms of an inordinate desire for power. The contrast between Artegall and Radigund is made quite clear throughout the episode, so much so that Artegall is hardly considered blameworthy. The fault lies with women out of their natural place of obedience and "base humilitie" to man; such women desire a licentious libertie" (V.v.25) as does Radigund, "Whose wandring fancie after lust did raunge" (V.v.26). In this situation Artegall remains stolidly faithful to Britomart, as Spenser explicitly points out:

Yet in the straightnesse of that captiue state, 
This gentle knight himselfe so well behaued, 
That nowistanding all the subtill bait, 
With which those Amazons his loue still crauied, 
To his owne loue his loialtie he saued: 
Whose character in th'Adamantine mould, 
Of his true hart so firmely was engraued, 
That no new loues impression euer could 
Bereaue it thence: such blot his honour blemish should. (V.vi.2)

Britomart then enters the narrative. After Talus comes to tell of Artegall's capture both Britomart and the Iron man set out to rescue the knight of Justice. Britomart
is taken for Artegaill in the house of Dolon and is tested by guile, but she refuses to take off her armor as Artegaill had done with Radigund. Britomart is similar to Artegaill, but as with Redcrosse and Arthur there are contrasts within likenesses. In the Isis Church Britomart enters without Talus to learn through a prophetic vision of clemency and her future marriage with Artegaill. Here we learn that the goddess Isis is Equity, whereas her husband Osiris is the Egyptian god of Justice (V.vii.2-3). Isis is also the Moon, whose priests are vowed to "stedfast chastity" (V.vii.9), and Osiris signifies the sun. The analogy between Isis the moon goddess and Britomart the figure of chastity is revealed further in Britomart's vision: While sacrificing to Isis Britomart is transformed into the crowned figure of the golden goddess herself; underneath her the sleeping crocodile awakens to devour rebellious flames but must be chastised before his "peerelesse powre" becomes tyrannous (V.vii.13-6). The prophetic meaning of the vision is explained by a priest the following day:

For that same Crocodile doth represent
The righteous Knight, that is thy faithfull louer,
Like to Osiris in all iust endeuer.
For that same Crocodile Osiris is,
That vnder Isis feete doth sleepe for euer:
To shew that clemence oft in things amis,
Restraines those sterne behests, and cruell doomes of his.

That Knight shall all the troublous stormes asswage,
And raging flames, that many foes shall reare,
To hinder thee from iust heritage
Of thy sires Crowne, and from thy countrey deare,
Then shalt thou take him to thy loued fere,
And ioyne in equall portion of thy realme.
And afterwards a sonne to him shalt beare,
That Lion-like shall shew his powre extreame . . .
(V.vii.22-3)

This vision of the marriage of Artegaill and Britomart, here
symbolized as the marriage of Justice and Equity, is a high
point in Book V. It is first a vision of the union of a
wrathful Justice, or Artegaill, with the clemency of a
Britomart, or the union of Artegaill's masculine aggressiveness with the feminine compassion of a Britomart or Mercilla.
The marriage of male and female is moreover a complementary
union, a discordia concors that through its progeny will
establish universal Justice and the return of Astraea to the
world. Spenser's attention to the marriage ritual and
feast has been noted in Books III and IV—the vision of the
marriage of Artegaill and Britomart is another of Spenser's
transcendent views of Concord, reverberating from individual
to social to national and to universal dimensions. Artegaill
needs Britomart, or Justice needs Equity, to complement
each other and produce harmony through their interaction.
The vision also reveals Artegaill as analogous to Osiris,
the god of Justice and the father of the Libyan Hercules of
the Berosus chronicle, as was propounded at the beginning
of Book V. Britomart, however, has been seen previously
as symbolic of Venus Armata or Concord, also presented as
Hercules Gallicus, and we see her here as Isis, the moon
goddess of chastity and mercy. The union of Artegaill
and Britomart can be seen as a union of the numerous complementary aspects of the Hercules figure, both as a virtuous hero and as a symbol of Concord, and can be interpreted on several levels of meaning simultaneously: euhemeristically it can symbolize the "imperial" marriage of Essex and Elizabeth, the marriage of Lord Grey's policies with the conciliatory efforts of the Queen; tropologically it is a union of Justice with Equity; anagogically it shadows forth a coming fulfillment of transcendent Love revealed in the Neo-Platonic mystic harmony of discordia concors.

After the vision of the Isis Church Britomart can leave to bring about the downfall of Radigund and the rescue of Artegaill, for she now embodies Herculean powers that Artegaill lacked earlier; she is now the true knight of Justice. After Artegaill's rescue it is significant that Britomart restores the natural order by placing the Amazon women in subjection to men she "did true Justice deale: / That all they as a Goddesse her adoring, / Her wisedome did admire, and hearkned to her loring" (V.vii.42). Britomart, unlike Radigund, places her lover in a position of masculine power and conceals her "womanish complaints" at the prospect of Artegaill's departure.

The relationship between Britomart and Artegaill is similar to the harmonious marital relationship between Argalus and Parthenia in Sidney's Arcadia—the satiric tradition that presented the degraded Hercules and the
lustful Iole has here been transcended in a vision of Renaissance Concord. Artegaill, in fact, never succumbs to lust with Radigund as Hercules had done with Iole, nor does Britomart's beauty lead him from his task. He remains a stalwart hero throughout the episode. Spenser emphatically affirms his masculinity as if to counter the satiric traditions of the effeminate Hercules and reinforce the Isis Church vision of a complementary heroic marriage. Thus at the beginning of Canto VIII Spenser notes that "beauties louely baite" can cause men to become weak and effeminate, citing the examples of Samson, Hercules, and Antony (V.viii.1-2). Artegaill, however, was not so transformed:

Yet could it not sterne Artegaill retaine,  
Nor hold from suite of his auowed quest, 
Which he had vndertane to Gloriane . . .  
(V.viii.3)

Spenser's treatment of the Hercules myth in The Faerie Queene is most intensive in Book V, where Artegaill, Britomart, and Arthur exemplify almost all of the traditional attributes and connotations of the Herculean virtuous hero and symbol of Concord. In the union of Artegaill and Britomart in the vision of the Isis Church are drawn together the euhemeristic imperial associations and the transcendent aspects of Concord that centered about the myth, and with the reentrance of Arthur into the narrative to fight the Souldan we are reminded
of the typological aspects of the Herculean Arthur who conquered Duessa's Hydra in Book I. The three Herculean heroes of Book V are not only figures of topical allegory. Spenser uses his Herculean references here to enrich the central virtue of Justice that this Book portrays—Justice is based upon a framework of social harmony and order; it is a virtue that promotes Concord and gives social meaning and purpose to heroic action.

There is yet one other aspect of the Hercules myth that Spenser calls upon in his poetry, though it is only faintly present in The Faerie Queene. In the Cave of Mammon, we recall, the apples of the Hesperides appeared to tempt Herculean Guyon. These apples were growing in the Garden of Proserpina, in a context of inordinate desire, but elsewhere Spenser indicates that earthly passion can be transmuted in the harmonious vision of Divine Love. In the Amoretti the poet sees in a love vision his mistress' breasts surpassing Hercules' apples in their purity:

Was it a dreame, or did I see it playne,  
a goodly table of pure yvory:  
all spred with iuncats, fit to entertayne  
the greatest Prince with pompous roialty.  
Mongst which there in a siluer dish did ly  
twoo golden apples of vnualewde price:  
far passsing those which Hercules came by,  
or those which Atalanta did entice.  
Exceeding sweet, yet void of sinfull vice,  
That many sought yet none could ever taste,  
sweet fruit of pleasure brought from paradise  
by loue himselfe, and in his garden plaste.
Her brest that table was so richly spredd,
my thoughts the guests, which would thereon haue
fedd. (Sonnet LXXVII)

This sonnet echoes the Song of Songs, as has been noted, and recalls Leander at the moment of love's conquest in Marlowe's Hero and Leander:

Leander now, like Theban Hercules,
Enter'd the orchard of th'Esperides,
Whose fruit none rightly can describe but he
That pulls or shakes it from the golden tree.

The Garden of Proserpina can be transcended, and the apples of the Hesperides serve as signposts on the way. Spenser's Garden of Proserpina itself foreshadows the Bower of Bliss, but the Bower of Bliss anticipates the Garden of Adonis, and the Garden of Adonis points toward the Temple of Venus and the Mount of Acidale. The golden apples in Proserpina's garden can foreshadow another Spenserian garden, the "siluer bowre" of Hebe where Hercules lives in immortal happiness with other virtuous heroes:

So hottie are they, and so fortunate,
Whom the Pierian sacred sisters loue,
That freed from bands of implacable fate,
And power of death, they liue for aye aboue,
Where mortall wreakes their blis may not remoue:
But with the Gods, for former vertues meede,
On Nectar and Ambrosia do feede. (Ruins of Time, 11. 393-9)

This is the same Eden garden of harmony and Concord that is portrayed as the heaven of love reached after purgatorial
pain in the *Hymne in Honour of Love*, a heaven in which
Hercules exists in apotheosis:

There thou them placest in a Paradize
Of all delight, and joyous happle rest,
Where they doe feede on Nectar heauenly wize,
With Hercules and Hebe, and the rest,
Of Venus dearlings, through her bountie blest,
And lie like Gods in yoaurie beds arayd,
With rose and lillies ouer them displayd.

(11. 280-6)

But Hercules in his apotheosis does not appear in
*The Faerie Queene*. In Spenser's poem Hercules is
essentially a figure of heroic action, a valiant struggler
against the forces of evil. Though Spenser interfuses the
multiple meanings of the myth within the heroic narrative,
we do not find Ronsard's Herculean Christ. Ronsard had
returned to the medieval typological traditions in his
*Hercule Chrestien* and had recreated Hercules in Christian
form; Spenser is a mythopoetic artist in that Hercules be-
comes a mythic symbol of Concord who must fulfill himself
through the heroic quest. Hercules is thus most appropriately
associated with many of Spenser's central heroic figures:
Redcrosse, Guyon, Britomart, Cambell and Cambina, Artegall,
and especially Arthur.

The Herculean hero continues his quest, and must do
so, in a world of constant mutability. The entrance of
Arthur in the last cantos of Book V marks a return to the
world of active endeavor after the vision of the Isis Church
and the reunion of Artegall and Britomart. Similarly the
Blatant Beast can enter here at the end of Book V and in Book VI to remind the heroic knight of his essential active task against the forces of evil and to recall him from sloth and self-pride. The Blatant Beast, we are told in Book VI, is a sibling to Orthrus, the demon hound of Geryon (VI.vi.9-12); elsewhere the Beast is said to be begotten of Cerberus, the three headed porter of hell (VI.i.8). The Blatant Beast is by whatever lineage a Satanic figure, comparable to Duessa's Hydra in Book I, and his appearance as the central evil of Book VI is not accidental. Evil intrudes into a world of chivalric heroism in the very marrow of the heroic achievement, for slander and envy are constant companions of the noble and virtuous. In Erasmus' Colloquies Philodoxus seeks for glory without envy, but one answers that such a request is "more than Jupiter granted even to Hercules himself; for after he had tamed so many monsters, last of all he had Hydra to engage with, that was the longest engagement of them all."  

The vision of the Graces on Mount Acidale, as a symbolic dance of Neo-Platonic cosmic harmony, does not last in a world of flux. The final Herculean references in The Faerie Queene are noteworthy in that they both link the central figure Calidore with Hercules and also show the necessity for further Herculean action. The pastoral Eden has not yet been reached for the epic hero. Two heroic similes associate Calidore in his conquest of the Blatant Beast with Hercules mastering the "hellborne Hydra"
and Cerberus (VI.xii.32, 35), but the Hydra of slander is not conquered so easily. The Herculean Calidore captures the Beast, but it breaks its chain and roams the world once more. The Spenserian world of the Herculean hero, the world of mutability, will not cease until the "Sabaoths sight."

Spenser's mythic approach to Hercules reveals him as a poet of the Renaissance. Confronted with religious tensions and Hydra-like conflicts, Spenser places Hercules within his historical allegory as an euhemeristic hero who foreshadows the fulfillment of the Tudors and the Queen to bring about the downfall of Catholicism and the return of political harmony and universal empire. Despite the rise of critical historiography and disbelief in the historicity of the myth Spenser turns to the Libyan Hercules of the Berosus chronicle and presents Hercules as a figure symbolic of national achievement and strength. At the same time Hercules can be revealed as a symbolic figure of Concord and of active virtue. The subtle interweaving of these multiple strands of meaning is characteristic of Spenser's technique but is also indicative of the situation of the Renaissance poet, who must mold his material into archetypal form through the efforts of his own controlled imagination. Hercules for Dante was a Christian figura; Hercules for Spenser remains a hero whose virtues adumbrate the divine grace of Arthur, and in his symbolic potential
he points toward the transcendent visions of mystic
harmony in which all heroic action, all mutability will
eventually repose.
NOTES

1 The thorny question of the exact relationship between the Italian Neo-Platonists, Erasmus, and Colet and More has not yet been adequately answered. Ernst Cassirer, The Platonic Renaissance in England (1932), trans. J.P. Pettigrove (Austin, Texas, 1953), pp. 11-24, traced Colet's exegetical method back to Nicholas of Cusa, viewed Erasmus' liberal philological approach as analogous to Neo-Platonic syncretism, and noted More's religious ideal of universal reason and theism in the Utopia. But Albert Hyma's implicit rebuttal in "The Origins of English Humanism," MLQ, IV (1940-1), 7-18, 25, presented the central Christian piety of these humanists as antithetical to Neo-Platonic liberal theism.

The debate remained unresolved when it was reopened by Raymond Marcel, "Les decouvertes d'Erasme en Angleterre," BHR, XIV (1952), 117-23. In the same year, however, Sears Jayne, "Ficino and the Platonism of the English Renaissance," CL, IV (1952), 214-38, surveyed the question and noted that Platonist influence in the early humanists was "still mainly cosmological and theological as it had been throughout the Middle Ages" (p. 225). More recently Leland Miles, John Colet and the Platonic Tradition (La Salle, Illinois, 1961), which is the initial volume of a three volume study, Fishers With Platonic Nets, dealing with Colet, More, and Erasmus, has concluded, "In his approach to the problem of pagan philosophy and Christian doctrine, we must therefore place John Colet, in intention at least, squarely within the Clementine tradition of St. Augustine" (p. 30). Miles discusses Colet's Neo-Platonic method of Scriptural exegesis but notes that this and other Neo-Platonic influences on Colet appear only when in compatibility with Catholic dogma; see pp. 182-6, 214-6.


3 Desiderius Erasmus, Proverbs or Adages, trans. Richard Taverner (London, 1569), Scholar's Facsimiles and Reprint Series (Gainesville, Florida, 1956), 16v-17r. O.B. White, "Richard Taverner's Interpretation of Erasmus in Proverbs or Adages," PMLA, LIX (1944), 932-5, notes that Taverner adds stronger scriptural coloring by omitting pagan sources and illustrations and adding or emphasizing biblical references.
4 Erasmus, *Apophthegmes*, trans. Nicholas Udall (1542), Book I, "Diogenes," No. 108, 116v; see also No. 86, 106v. Unless specified otherwise, this and all following book references in this chapter will be from London editions.


6 In the works of Sir Thomas More I have found only two allusions to Hercules: In Book I of the *Utopia* (1516), trans. H.V.S. Ogden (New York, 1949), p. 16, the epithet "by Hercules" appears in the speech of a fool, who would send all beggars to monasteries. In a French poem in the medieval *de contemptu mundi* tradition on the power of Fortune More includes Hercules in a typical list of heroic figures who have now vanished (*More, The English Works*, ed. W.E. Campbell and A.W. Reed, I (1931), 226).


12 Aesop's fables were widely known in Renaissance England, being first edited by Caxton in 1484. Though I have not been able to investigate all editions of the fables in sixteenth and seventeenth century England, Hercules does not figure prominently in these beast tales. The first mention of the classical hero that I have found appears in a school text by William Bullokar, *Aesopz Fablz, in tru Ortography with Grammarnotz* (London, 1585),
No. 116, p. 112 ("Of the contry-man and Hercules"), though the index lists this fable as also available in Latin fable books printed by James Jimta (Lionz (1571), p. 221) and T. Marsh (1580, fol. 23).

In the fable a carter appeals to the god Hercules for aid when his cart is stuck in deep mud, whereupon a voice thunders from heaven, "Thu tryflor, whip the horse, and doo thy-self laen with miht too the whelz, and then cal' Her-cules." The fable appears later in a Latin Cambridge edition, AEsoni Phrygis Fabulae (Cambridge, 1635), p. 40, and is still present in the collection of Samuel Croxall, Fables of Aesop and Others, 4th ed. (1737), No. 56, pp. 101-2.

13 John Harington, A Brief Apology for Poetry, Elizabethan Critical Essays, II, 194-222. All following references to the Apologie are to this edition. Harington's approach to Ariosto has been recently discussed by Hallett Smith, Elizabethan Poetry (Cambridge, Mass., 1952), pp. 312-22.

14 Harington, trans. Ariosto's Orlando Furioso (1591). All following references to Ariosto's poem and Harington's commentary are to this edition.


17 Fraunce, 27V (Hercules and Cerberus), 33r (Hercules and Hebe), 34r (Hercules versus Geryon), 44r (Hercules-Omphale), 46v-47r (Hercules' name, labors, death, mention of Hercules Gallicus).


19 See above Chap. IV, n. 55.

20 Arthur Golding, trans. Ovid's Metamorphoses (1567), "To the Reader," A3v. All following references are to this edition.

22 The mythographical manuals of Giraldi, Conti, and Cartari were widely known in late sixteenth century England; see Seznec, pp. 279-80, 312-16. On the Renaissance dictionaries, see DeWitt T. Starnes and E.W. Talbert, Classical Myth and Legend in Renaissance Dictionaries (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1955). I have noted the following comment in Harington's Ariosto, p. 434: Hercules' "twelve labours be knowne, howbeit Stephen in his Historicael Dictionarie sets downe 34 labours."


26 Sir William Temple, Ad Everardum Digbieum Admonitio de Unica P. Rami Methodo (1580), cited in Perry Miller, The New England Mind (New York, 1939), p. 499. Ramus himself may have viewed his efforts as Herculean: Father Ong notes that Ramus' favorite motto was "labor improbus omnia vincit" (Unremitting labour conquers all); see W.J. Ong, S.J., "Ramist Classroom Procedure and the Nature of Reality," SEL, I (1961), 1, 43.

27 Digby, De duplici Methodo Libri Duo, Unicam P. Rami Methodum Refutantes (1580), A4r.


29 Whitney, A Choice of Emblemes (Leyden, 1586), p. 16. The most thorough treatment of the emblem was in Alciati's Emblemata, No. 58, ed. Mignault (Paris, 1589), pp. 231-3, where Philostratus' history of the pigmies in his Imaginibus is cited.
30 Thomas Nashe, *Works*, ed. R.B. McKerrow (1910), I, 326. The allusion to Hercules and the Augean stables re-appears later in Nashe's *Lenten Stuffe* (1599), in a different satiric context: When a dish of red herring is uncovered for ecclesiastical display before the Pope, it "made such an ayre, as Alcides himselfe that clenched the stables of Aegaeus nor any hostler was able to endure" (*Works*, III, 209).

31 Harvey, *Works*, ed. Grosart, II, 114-5. The following references to *Pierces Supererogation* are to this edition.


35 Nashe, *Works*, ed. McKerrow, III, 98. The following references to *Have with you* are to this edition.

36 This proverb had also appeared in *Pierces Supererogation*, *Works*, II, 144, as a criticism of the Puritan reformers who would give every parish priest powers as great as Hercules, who could not himself face multiple difficulties at one time. Harvey apparently was fond of this proverb and probably attempted to follow its precept; the saying also was written in Harvey's *Commonplace Book* (wr. c. 1584)---see *Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia*, ed. G.C. Moore Smith (Stratford-upon-Avon, 1913), p. 94.


40 For a convenient sketch of the tradition and some significant appearances of the fable in sixteenth century England, see Hallet Smith, *Elizabethan Poetry*, pp. 293-303, 340-42.


43 Panofsky, *Hercules am Scheidewege*, pp. 39, 53, discusses Brant's book and its source (Basilius, De Legendis Libris Gentilium, IV, translated by Leonardo Aretino in the last quarter of the fifteenth century). In the German Renaissance Hercules' Choice also figures prominently in the works of Hans Sachs and others (see Panofsky, pp. 83-103); the legend continues to thrive later in Handel's opera, Bach's cantata *Die Wahl des Hercules* (1733), the works of Christoph Wieland, and as a proverbial saying "Hercules am Scheidewege." See A. Blunt, "God and Prince in Bach's Cantatas," *JWCI*, II (1938-9), 178-82; Panofsky, pp. 124-42; and F. Riedl, "Der Sophist Proklos und die Wanderung seines Herakles am Scheidewege durch die römische und deutsche Literatur," Jahresbericht des Staatsgymnasiums zu Laibach (1907-8), 34-46.


45 *Ibid.*, II, 289-305. This context for the legend is anticipated in the Oxford drawing cited in note 42 above: The upper half of the drawing presents Virtue and Vice; the lower half shows Life and Death.

has deteriorated here to one of love versus money, despite the call to Herculean analogies.


48 Philip de Mornay, A Discourse of Life and Death, trans. the Countess of Pembroke (1592).

49 Cicero, trans. Grimald, 05r. Smith, Elizabethan Poetry, pp. 300-1, also cites William Fulbecke, A Booke of Christian Ethics (1587), D8v-Er, and Grimaldus Goslicius, The Counsellor (1598), Mr.


52 Robert Greene, Planetomachia (1585), C2v-3v.

53 Sir William Cornwallis, the Younger, Essaves (1600), ed. D.C. Allen (Baltimore, 1946), "Of Knowledge," p. 133; Professor Allen's note, p. 257, does not mention Hercules' Choice.

54. Thomas Bradshaw, The Shepherds Starre (1591), C3v-D2r. All following references are to this edition.

55 Bradshaw's reference to "wandering Knightes" recalls Jean Cartigny's The Voyage of the Wandering Knight (Antwerp, 1557), trans. William Goodyear (1581): Chapter vi concerns the Wandering Knight's Choice between Virtue and Voluptuousness at a fork in the road, and though Hercules is not mentioned specifically the scene is strikingly similar. Moreover, in the preceding Chapter v there is a lengthy discussion of Hercules in euhemeristic terms, following the account of Jean Lemaire. See Dorothy A. Evans' edition of the 1581 English translation of Cartigny (Seattle, 1951),
pp. 28-31, 18-20, and notes. Professor Evans also notes the parallels between the Choice of the Wandering Knight and the Choice of the Red Cross Knight in Book I of The Faerie Queene; see pp. xliiv-xlv and notes on Chapter vi, p. 151.

56 Seznec, pp. 274-7, notes this opposition and its paradoxical result—a resurgence of allegorical justiﬁcation of myth.

57 Gosson, The Schoole of Abuse (1579), A3v. Maximus of Tyre was also specifically interested in Hercules; see E.M. Waith, "Landino and Maximus of Tyre," Renaissance News, XIII (1960), 289-94.


59 Agrippa, Of the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of Artes and Sciences, trans. James Sanford (1569). All following references are to this edition.

60 See L.B. Campbell, Shakespeare's "Histories" (San Marino, Calif., 1947), Chap. ix, for a lengthy discussion of the debate between advocates of poetry and those of history.


62 See, for example, the sixteenth century attacks on the early miscellany The Court of Venus, as surveyed by Russell A. Fraser, ed. The Court of Venus (Durham, N.C., 1955), pp. 56-72. The whole question of Biblical poetry as a replacement to pagan poetry in the sixteenth century has been surveyed by L.B. Campbell, Divine Poetry and Drama in Sixteenth-Century England (Cambridge, 1959), Part I, espec. Chaps. ix-xi; Miss Campbell's discussion of the influence of Du Bartas and his Christian muse, Urania, first appeared in the Huntington Library Bulletin, No. 8 (1935), 29-70. These studies can be buttressed by the work of Maurice Evans, "Metaphor and Symbol in the Sixteenth Century," Essays in Criticism, III (1953), 267-84. Professor Evans points out that both Biblical and mythological imagery tend to become more rhetorical and less symbolically real by the end of the century, but his examples of myth are drawn consistently from the later seventeenth century, except for
Leone in Italy. If his remarks dealing with myth are chronologically inaccurate, they are still helpful in indicating the increasing emphasis on myth as unreal fable and pagan superstition by the time of the seventeenth century; for a parallel reduction of traditional religious symbolism in the seventeenth century to poetic metaphor and extraneous cliche, see M.M. Ross, *Poetry and Dogma* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1954).


66 *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* (1576), ed. H.E. Rollins (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), No. 22, p. 25; see also No. 39 ("Though Fortune haue sette thee on his / Remember yet that thou shalt die"), p. 40, and No. 1, pp. 5-7 and notes pp. 181-2.


69 The merits of women were a matter of continual debate during the period, especially as regards the rights and abilities of a woman ruler. See J.E. Phillips, Jr., "The Background of Spenser's Attitude Toward Women Rulers," HGLQ, V (1941-2), 5-32, and Carroll Camden, The Elizabethan Woman (Houston, 1952), pp. 241-55. Camden, p. 249, cites C. Fyrrye, The praise and Dispraise of Women (1569?), where Hercules is noted as a hero who has fallen to the monstrous clutches of women.


73 George Pettie, A Petite Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure (1576), ed. Herbert Harman (1938), pp. 97-9, espec. 98. See also the story of Cephalus and Procris, Ibid., p. 206, where maligned Cephalus protests his innocence against Procris' jealous accusations and reminds her pointedly of the example of Deianeira's jealousy and the unworthy ends it caused.

74 The Arundel Harington MS., No. 9 ("In lief and health ye I remayne"), I, 84.

76 Turberville, trans. The Ecloges of Mantuan (1567), 38v; John Grange, The Golden Aphroditis (1577), LII-v; Francis Meres, Palladis Tamia (1598), "Women" (47r-v), and see also "Fortitude" (83v); The Gude and Godlie Ballatis (1567), pp. 213-9 ("Was not Salomon, the King, / To miserie be wemen brocht?"). The last work is a Scottish rebuttal against the earlier Scottish version of William Elderton's "The panges of love" (1558-9), reprinted in Old Ballads, from Early Printed Copies, ed. J. Payne Collier, Percy Society No. 1 (1840), pp. 25-8; see Rollins Index, No. 2039. Whereas Elderton's original plea for a lady's love is only nine stanzas long, the Scot rebuttal is twenty-three stanzas long and includes six stanzas on Biblical examples alone. There were other "King Solomon" ballads that might have provided sources for the Scottish answer to Elderton: see Rollins Index, Nos. 1372, 2872, and also 36-8, 1863.

77 George Gascoigne, Works, ed. J.W. Cunliffe (Cambridge, 1907-10), I, 95; in the "Weedes," Ibid., p. 385, we find The Adventures of F.J. and Ferdinando's love verses to Elinor, including the lines "To it /Love/ the stoutest yeeld, and strongest feele like wo, / Bold Hercules and Sampson both, did prove it to be so." These passages are quoted here from the 1575 edition, but they were printed unchanged from the 1573 edition; see Works, I, 481, 492. Gascoigne recognized that even the strongest fall to woman's wiles; see The Griefe of Jove. Certayne Elegies, "The Thirde Sone," Works, II, 543:

Yea Hercules, whose might was never awed,  
By womans wyle (yet) weakely lost his lyfe  
Suche toyes (to tame the strongest men) are ryfe.


79 Gluttony and sloth were not ignored, however. In
Abraham Fleming's translation of Aelian's A Registre of Mysteries (1576), B2V, the story is told of the eating and drinking contests of Hercules and Lepreas, that Hercules won handily; Bishop Joseph Hall's Virgidiemiarum (1597-8), Book III, Satire 3 ("Ostentatious Meals"), I. 19, notes that Hercules was a passionate beef eater.

Francis Meres, Palladis Tamia, "Idlenesse" (303f.), cites Plutarch's saying, "As the Milesian garment did not become Hercules, when hee served Omphale, after he had put off his Lion's spoiles: so neither doth it befit a civil man, after his magistracy to give himselfe unto idlenesse and voluptuousnes."

On lust and effeminacy, see Dickey, pp. 36-40, and Barroll, "Enobarbus' Description of Cleopatra," pp. 71-2.

80 Fraunce, The Third Part of the Countesse of Pembroke's Yuychurch (1592), 47f.


There is a curious reference to Hercules in A Handful of Pleasant Delights (1584), ed. H.E. Rollins (Cambridge, Mass., 1924), No. 17 ("A warning for Woers, that they be not over hastie, nor deceived with Womens beautie"), I. 1278: The author warns lovers that "who seeks to plese, may ridden be like Hercules." Apparently, as Rollins indicates in the notes, pp. 105-6, this is a twisted version of an Oriental tale of Aristotle, who allowed himself to be ridden on all fours when besotted by love; a similar Herculean version appears in a fifteenth century Spanish ballad collection, El Cancionero de Juan Alfonso de Baena, No. 533.

82 See Richard Bernheimer, Wild Men In the Middle Ages (Cambridge, Mass., 1952), pp. 101-2; Bernheimer, p. 206, n. 53, cites also E. Curtius, Heracles der Satyr und Dreißigräuber (Berlin, 1852). For an Elizabethan echo of this tradition, note Lyly, "Complaint of the Satyres against the Nymphes" (1602), Works, ed. Bond, I, 497-8, stanza 4:

If our beards be rough and long,  
Soe had Hercules the strong:  
Yet Delianer, with many a kisse,  
Joyn'd her tender lippes to his.


85 Marston, Works, III, 289-90, Satire V, 11. 47-50; on Hercules' lust see also The Scourge of Villainy, Works, III, 328-9, Satire IV, 11. 87-92.


87 Marston, Works, III, 354-62. All following references to this satire are to this edition.

88 I would thus agree more with the view of Caputi, pp. 46-51, that Marston in his satires is motivated by social and philosophic idealism, than with the opinion of Peter, Chap. vi, that Marston is basically an obscene and arrogant posturer. On Marston's Stoicism, see Caputi, pp. 52-79. Kernan, pp. 118-26, notes that Marston's persona is also associated with Calvinism in its more extreme forms.

89 William Smith, Chloria (1596), Elizabethan Sonnets, ed. Sidney Lee, II (Westminster, 1904), Sonnet XXV, p. 337; Thomas Watson, The Hecatompethia or Passionate Century of Loue (1582), ed. E. Arber, English Reprints No. 21 (1870), Sonnet LXXI, p. 107 (Hercules is referred to in 11. 7-8). The theme that the Gods themselves are subject to Love, including Hercules, also appears in Turberville's Epitaphs, Epigrams, Songs and Sonets (1567), B3V, and in William Painter, The Palace of Pleasure, Tome I (1566), No. 44 ("Alerane and Adelasia"), ed. Joseph Jacobs (1890), I, 263-4.


92 Sidney, "Arcadia," Works, I, 75-6. All further references to the later Arcadia are to this edition. For the corresponding device in the Old Arcadia, an "Egle covered with the fethers of a Dove, and yet lying under an other Dove," see Ibid., IV, 24. The device of Hercules with a distaff also appears on the jeweled robe clasp of Faunus in John Weever's Faunus and Melliflora (1600), I. 57-8, ed. A. Davenport, Liverpool Reprints No. 2 (London, 1946), p. 9. In this early erotic section of the poem the wood nymphs urge Faunus not to be modest in love, recalling for his benefit Hercules' rape of Ioile, I. 327-32, though at the same time Hercules' enslavement to love is not denied.

93 Musidorus' argument appears in the Old Arcadia, IV, 17.

94 J.F. Danby, Poets on Fortune's Hill (London, 1952), p. 56, has recognized Sidney's emphasis on a synthesis of masculine and feminine attributes; hermaphroditism was treated in positive fashion in terms of the androgyne myth. For an early English example of this love synthesis, see the Arundel MS, No. 274, I. pp. 320-1.

95 Ibid., pp. 51-2.


98 See above Chap. II, notes 39-43. Louis le Roy, Of the Interchangeable Course, or Variety of Things in the Whole World, trans. R.A. (1594), 64v-65r, recalled Seneca's depiction of Alexander as a "furious young man" who through his desire of glory determined to surpass the deeds of Hercules.

100 Ovid, Metamorphoses, IX, 229-73; see Hermann Fränkel, Ovid: A Poet Between Two Worlds, p. 212, n. 24.


102 See Simon, pp. 132-55 and notes.


104 Bradshaw, The Shepherds Starre (1591), 02r-3v.


Stephen Hawes, The Pastime of Pleasure (1509), ed. Mead, 11. 1030-46, rehearses the battle of Hercules against the Hydra of sophistry from "the cronycles of Spayne."


111 Alciati, *Emblemata*, No. 45, pp. 195-6; Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, ed. Willcock and Walker, p. 104; Samuel Daniel, trans. *The Worthy Tract of Paulus Iovius... of Rare Inventions... called Imprese* (1585), B8r. For a representation of the device, see Sir Henry Godyere, *The Mirrour of Maiestie* (1618), Plate 28, ed. H. Green and J. Croston, *Holbein Society No. 3* (1870); this plate was taken from Le Sententiose Imprese... of Symeonik (Lyon, 1560). The device was also interpreted by G. Ruscelli, *Le Imprese Illustri* (Venice, 1566), pp. 122-.


112 Guazzo, *The Civile Conversation*, Book II, trans. G. Pettie (Books I-III, 1581) and B. Young (Book IV, 1586), ed. E. Sullivan (1925), I, 185. The heroic achievement symbolized by Charles' device could also be found adaptable for the hyperbolic conceits of amorous admirers. Witness the lover's portrayal of his
mistress' breasts in Barnabe Barnes' Parthenophil and Parthenophe (1593), ed. Lee, Elizabethan Sonnets, I, 295:

Round rising hills, white hills (sweet Venus bless them!) Nature's rich trophies, not those hills unlike, Which that great monarch, Charles, whose power did strike From th' Arctic to the Antarctic, dignified With proud Plus ultra: which Cerography In unknown Characters of Victory, Nature hath set; by which she signified Her conquests' miracle reared up on high!

For Ne Plus Ultra as a heavenly warning from "the Divine grace" to the lover, admonishing him to forego the miseries of love, see Thomas Watson, Hecatompithia, Sonnet 97, ed. Arber, p. 133.

113 Ariosto, Orlando Furioso, VI.17, XV.14-8, trans. Harington, pp. 42, 114.


115 Louis le Roy, Of the . . . Variety of Things, Book X, 111-119. In the Renaissance the loadstone itself was called Hercules' stone because of its magnetic strength; see William Gilbert, On the Magnet (1600), I.ii and IV.xi, trans. S.P. Thompson et al (Gilbert Club ed., 1900) and re-edited D.J. Price (New York, 1958), pp. 8, 169. Chapman links the Herculean magnet image with Homer's divine afflatus that guides his translator's pen; see the "Epistle to Somerset: Odysseys" (1614), ll. 19-28, Poetic Works, ed. Bartlett, pp. 405-6:

And as th' influent stone
Of Father Ioues great and laborious Sonne,
Lifts high the heauie Iron; and farre implies The wide Orbs; that the Needle rectifies,
In vertuous guide of euvery sea-driuen course,
To all aspiring, his one boundlesse force:
So from one Homer, all the holy fire,
That euer did the hidden heate inspire
In each true Muse, came cleerly sparkling downe,
And must for him, compose one flaming Crowne.

117 Ramus, The Art of Arithmetick, trans. Wm. Kempe (1592), A4V, as cited by R.D. Pepper, "Plus Ultra and Sir Francis Drake," Notes and Queries, N.S. V (1959), 438-9. Pepper sees Plus Ultra here as a personification and as an abbreviation for Ne Plus Ultra, but it seems more probable that the motto refers to Charles V and Spain. The Her- culean mariners were continually confronting the Spanish and their Catholic power during the century. Note the following lines from George Peele's "A Farewell" (1589), The Life and Minor Works, ed. D.H. Horne (New Haven, 1952), pp. 220-3, 160-3, addressed to Drake and Sir John Norris upon their expedition to the Azores following the defeat of the Spanish Armada:

And hewe a passage with your conquering swordes
By lande and Sea: . . .
From great Alcides pyllers braunching foorth,
Even to the Gulfe that leads to Loftie Rome,
There to deface the pryte of Antechrist,
And pull his Paper walles and popery downe:
A famous enterprise for Englands strength,
To steele your swordes on Avarice triple crowne,
And clense Augeus staules in Italie. (ll. 27-8, 33-9)

118 The verses were recorded in handwritten form by Sir John Harington about 1590; see The Arundel MS, No. 200, ed. Hughey, I, 244, and notes (II. 327). They were printed in William Segar, Honor, Military, and Ciuil (1602), p. 198, together with a description of the presentation before the Queen, pp. 197-200. George Peele's Polyhymnia (1590) is a verse account of the tilting combat and pageantry; see the edition of Polyhymnia in Horne, The Life and Minor Works, pp. 231-43 with the extensive introduction, pp. 165-73. See also F.A. Yates, "Elizabethan Chivalry: The Romance of the Accession Day Tilts," JWCI, XX (1957), 17.


120 George Chapman, The Tears of Peace. Inductio, ll. 1-6, Poems, ed. P.B. Bartlett (1941); Francis Bacon, Of the Advancement of Learning, Book II, "To the King," Works, ed. Spedding, Ellis, and Heath (1879), III, 321-2.

121 George Gascoigne, The Princely Pleasures at Kenelworth Castle. Works, ed. Cunliffe, II, 92, and see also 92-3, 98-9; the scene was also described in Robert

122 Gascoigne, Works, II, 484.

123 Lyly, "The Triumphs of Trophies," Works, ed. Bond, III, 428-32. All following references to the poem are to this edition.

124 Lyly's emphasis on snakes here is conventional enough, but it is interesting to note that Elizabeth owned a jacket embroidered with the infant Hercules strangling the serpents; see M. Jourdain, English Secular Embroidery (1910), p. 144.

125 M.C. Bradbrook, The School of Night (Cambridge, 1936), pp. 127-8, 162-7. Shakespeare's role in this "School" has been questioned; see E.A. Strathmann, "The Textual Evidence for The School of Night," MLN, LVI (1941), 176-86, and his later book, Sir Walter Raleigh, a Study in Elizabethan Skepticism (New York, 1951), passim.

126 Ibid., pp. 130-7.

127 For an explanation of this incident see Poems, ed. Bartlett, Gloss 9, p. 29: "Here he alludes to the fiction of Hercules, that in his labor at Tartessus fetching away the oxen, being (more then he liked) heat with the beames of the Sunne, he bent his bow against him, etc. Vt ait Pherecides in 3. lib Historiarum." All following references to Chapman's poems are to this edition. F.L. Schoell, Études sur l'Humanisme Continental en Angleterre (Paris, 1926), p. 183, traces Chapman's reference here to Conti, Chap. vii.1 ("De Hercule").

128 See the pertinent comments by Yates, "Queen Elizabeth as Astraea," p. 72.

129 See also Bradbrook, The School of Night, p. 186, n. 11.

130 Peele, "The Praise of Chastity," Life and Minor Works, ed. Horne, pp. 260-4. All following references are to this edition. The poem is also available in The Phoenix


133 See Graves, The Greek Myths, 132. g. For a contemporary account of the Phoenicians' worship of Hercules, see Samuel Purchas, Hakluytes Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrims (1625), Hakluyt Society ES 14 (Glasgow, 1905), p. 207.


135 Hakluyt, ES 4, p. 267. The quotation is not exact and refers to the attempts of the Frisians to locate the pillars of Hercules on the northern coast of Germany, but neither Hakluyt nor Purchas considered it inappropriate to apply to Essex and Cadiz. See Cornelii Taciti, De Germania, ed. Henry Furneaux (Oxford, 1894), Chap. xxxiv, pp. 97-8; a German Hercules is mentioned also in Chap iii (p. 43) and ix (pp. 28-9), and is discussed in Furneaux' introduction, pp. 28-9.

136 Purchas (1625), Hakluyt Society, ES 33 (1907), pp. 1-23, espec. p. 22. On the Hakluyt editions, see the editors, Hakluyt Society ES 1 (1903), p. xiv; the title page of the first volume of the second edition, which referred to "the famous victories atchieued at the citie of Cadiz, 1596," was also changed.


138 Heywood, Troia Britanica (1609), Canto VII, st. 50-1 (Argonauts, p. 151) and 86-7 (p. 160).
139 Marston, Works, ed. Bullen, III, 267; Bullen cites Grosart's note on I. 107, "The fleet's return'd. What news from Rodi?", as possible reference to the 1596 Cadiz expedition.

The allusion to Hercules' lion skin and the dissemblers who wear it is discussed in detail in Nicholas Udall's commentary on Erasmus' Apophthegmes (1542), 106^v, where such a disguiser is noted as effeminate and hypocritical; Abraham Fraunce, The Third Part of the Countesse of Pembroke's Vychurch (1592), 46^v, comments on Hercules' lion skin that "a valiant man vseth open and Lionlike prowesse, and not treacherous and foxelike wiles." Marston probably turned also to Cartari's mythographical handbook, to which he explicitly refers in Satire II of the Metamorphosis, l. 27. Cartari, in the Du Verdier translation, p. 417, explains Hercules' lion skin as signifying "la grandeur & magnanimité de l'esprit." Marston's verse satires, as we have discussed earlier, are centrally concerned with the questions of pretense and disguise, seen in terms of opinion and effeminacy, problems also discussed by Cartari in relation to the modern "iron age"; see Cartari, trans. Lynche, 9^v, and Victor Harris, All Coherence Gone (Chicago, 1949), p. 89.


142 Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesie, ed. Willcock and Walker. All following references are to this edition.

143 John Florio, His firste Fruites (1578), ed. Arundel del Re (Formosa, Japan, 1936), Chap. xxvii, pp. 132-4.

145 Gavin Douglas, Poetical Works, ed. John Swall (Edinburgh, 1874), I, 61, and see also pp. 45-6, 75; Stephen Hawes, The Example of Vertu (1510), cc58-60.


147 Isabel E. Rathborne, The Meaning of Spenser's Fairyland (New York, 1937). The comments that follow are much indebted to Miss Rathborne's findings, to which my additional evidence adds further support.

148 Rathborne, p. 78.


150 See Rathborne, pp. 79-80, 86-90.

151 John Skelton, trans. The Bibliotheca Historica of Diodorus Siculus, ed. F.M. Salter and H.L.R. Edwards, EETS OS 233 (1956) and 239 (1957). Diodorus distinguished three Hercules--an Egyptian, a Cretan, and a Greek--noting that the Greek Hercules, "for by-caus he was lyke unto the ij former Hercules, both in name and in deedes of knyghtly auaunsement, he vnto hymself arettyd the famous actes & notable fayettes of the other twyne" (EETS OS 233, p. 339, and also pp. 33-5; the Greek Hercules is discussed in full pp. 360-95). See also Rathborne on Diodorus and Hercules, pp. 90-2.

152 Kelton, Chronycle with a Genealogie (1547), as cited by Rathborne, p. 99; on Kelton see also Rathborne, 69, 86, 113.

154 Ibid., p. 136.


156 See Rathborne, pp. 93-4, 97-8; Miss Rathborne's argument, pp. 111-4, for the Libyan Hercules as Elfinan in Spenser's Roll of Elfin Empears (F.Q., II.x.72) is also convincing.


159 Pomponius Mela, *De Situ Orbis*, "De Gallia;" this work was translated into English by Arthur Golding in 1585. Mela was apparently more acceptable than Berosus; Harrison, Ibid., I, margin p. 7, cited him as an authority, and though Stow in *The Annales* rejected Berosus he felt obliged to mention the account of Mela (Stow, Annales, p. 6). Richard Grafton in *A Chronicle at Large* (1569), pp. for Johnson (1809), I, 23-6, questioned the Albion legend as connected with the daughters of Dioclesian but then cited Mela's account of Hercules versus Albion as perhaps more credible.

160 Polydore Vergil, *Anglica Historia*, Book I, Camden Society, 1st Series, No. 36 (1846), ed. H. Ellis, pp. 31-2; on Vergil as an euhemerist, see Seznec, p. 22.

162 Camden, Britannica, ed. Gough, I, lxxv-lxvi. All following references are to this edition.


164 In one instance the converse was apparently true. Thomas Fenne, Fennes Frutes (1590), 83v-7r, contrasted the deceitful acts of the Trojans with those of noble Hercules in connection with the first destruction of Troy, and thereby attacked the Elizabethan attempts to establish Trojan national origins. After recording the story of Hercules' rescue of Hesione, Laomedon's treachery, and the resultant destruction of Troy, Fenne added, "This I am sure, no Nation of the world can deny, but that Hercules was always a freer of Countreyes from tyrannie, a reformer of wrongs, a helper of the afflicted, and never in his life did inuie or hurt anie prince, people, or Commonwealth, without just cause of shamefull villanie" (87r). This view of Hercules need not have come from Berosus, but the emphasis on Hercules as a public guardian against tyranny is similar. Fenne could have been influenced by the work of Cornelius Nepos cited in the margin, 86v, for Nepos included Britons as helpers to Hercules in the rescue of Hesione; see Camden, Britannia, I, lxix-lxx, where he refutes Nepos' claims.

165 Holinshed, I, 431, discusses approvingly the theory of the Celtic origin of the Britons, citing Bodin, Vergil, and John Bale.

166 The same legend appears in George Buchanan's History of Scotland, trans. James Aikman (Glasgow, 1827), I, 14-, as quoted in Rathborne, p. 165. Spenser, of course, used Buchanan in the Vene of the Present State of Ireland.

167 Stow, Annales, p. 6; Holinshed, I, 433; Camden, Britannia, I, 37-8.

168 Holinshed, I, 433; Harrison, "The Description," Holinshed's Chronicles, I, 2 (Harrison refers here also to the figure of Hercules Gallicus in the 1587, but not the 1577, edition of The Chronicles); Camden, Britannia, I, 37.
169 See Baron, "The Querelle of the Ancients and the Moderns," pp. 13-4, on the support of the moderns by the Erasmus-More circle, especially Juan Luis Vives.


172 The seventeenth century Goodman-Hakewill controversy is discussed in detail by Victor Harris, All Coherence Gone (Chicago, 1949). The attitudes toward history in the sixteenth century have not yet been thoroughly investigated, but the multitude of viewpoints are indicated in H. Weisiger, "Ideas of History During the Renaissance," JHI, VI (1945), 415-35, and H. Haydn, The Counter-Renaissance, pp. 153-4, 160-6, 424-41, 519-33.

173 Philip de Mornay, A Woorke concerning the trewnesse of the Christian Religion, trans. P. Sidney and A. Golding (1587), pp. 378-405, 449-77, espec. p. 470. Harington, in a historical note on Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, XXXII.11, suggests that the long night of the birth of Hercules and the long day of Joshua's battle are historically co-existent and explainable due to astronomical calculations (Harington edition, p. 266); though Harington does not deny Hercules' historicity here, his rational approach to the myth is noteworthy in that it looks for Biblical analogies.

174 All references to Spenser's poetry are to J.C. Smith and E. de Selincourt, ed. The Poetical Works (1912). 2 vols.

175 There were other sources to which Spenser may have turned here. The Spenser Variorum editors surveyed the controversy concerning Hawes' Pastime of Pleasure as a source for Book I of The Faerie Queene and concluded that Hawes' poem was undoubtedly part of Spenser's intellectual milieu. In the Pastime of Pleasure, ed. Mead, II, 137-45, Hawes recalled Hercules' fight against the Hydra and interpreted
it as a struggle against sophistry and fraud:

Seuen sophyms full harde and fallacyous
This Ydre vset in perposycyon
Vnto the people and was full rygoryous
To deuoure them where lacked responcyon
And whan one reason had conclusyon
And other reason than incontynent
Began agayne with subtyll argument

For whiche cause the poetes couertly
With vii hedes doth this Ydre depaynt . . .

See E. Greenlaw, C.G. Osgood, and F.M. Padelford, et al., The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition (Baltimore, 1932-49), I, 414-8. This edition will be hereafter cited as the Variorum Spenser. Hawes' interpretation of the Hydra was the traditional one, appearing first in Plato's Republic (IV.426) and available in the Renaissance mythological handbooks; see Merritt Hughes, "The Arthurs of the Faerie Queene," Études Anglaises, VI (1953), 205.

176 See the discussions of Arthur's contemporary reputation in J.W. Bennett, The Evolution of "The Faerie Queene" (Chicago, 1942), pp. 61-79. On the imperial Arthur in The Faerie Queene, see Hughes, Ibid., pp. 194-8; Hughes, p. 204, suggests further that Arthur's emblematic armor matches in its synthesis of pagan and Christian elements the symbolic portrayal of Hercules in G. - B. Giraldi's Ercole. D.C. Allen, "Arthur's Diamond Shield in the Faerie Queene," JEGP, XXXVI (1937), 234-43, has pointed out that Arthur's shield is symbolic of repentance that must come to the aid of Redcrosse's shield of faith.


179 F.M. Padelford and M. O'Conner, "Spenser's Use of the Saint George Legend," SP, XXIII (1926), 142-56. Caxton's history of St. George in The Golden Legend (1503), K3V-5r, does not mention the Hydra but presents close similarities to Hercules' rescue of Hesione from the sea serpent.
On the Order of the Garter and Elizabeth, see F.A. Yates, "Elizabethan Chivalry: The Romance of the Accession Day Tilts," 22-3. In a Protestant polemic, Pasquine in a Traunce, trans. W.P. (1566?), 47, the St. George legend is condemned as a fable but is presented allegorically: The dragon is the Devil, the King's daughter the Church, and St. George is Christ. Thomas Wilson in The Arte of Rhetorique, ed. Mair, p. 197, gives the legend a tropological interpretation but cautions that this is idol worship and that saints' lives should not be placed in the hands of laymen. Erasmus' comment in The Praise of Folly, trans. Dean, p. 80, is perhaps pertinent here: "In St. George they have turned up another Hercules or Hippolytus. They all but adore his horse, which is piously studded and ornamented, and they ingratiate themselves by small gifts." This passage was omitted from Chalonor's 1549 and c. 1560 English translation.

Frank Kermode, "The Cave of Mammon," Elizabethan Poetry, Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies 2 (1960), pp. 164-72, espec. pp. 166-8. Professor Kermode notes, pp. 164-5, that the standard commentary on the Eleusinian mysteries was that of J. Meurs, Eleusinia, not published til 1619. Spenser, however, may have known of the Eleusinian mysteries prior to Meurs' commentary. The Axiochus, a supposed Platonic dialogue whose English translation in 1592 was attributed to Spenser, has Socrates speak of a heavenly pastoral Eden similar to the Elysian fields in which:

... they which haue taken holy orders are highly advanced and reverenced, dayly ministring the vnsearchable rytes of Religion. Wherefore then shouldest thou doubt but to be made partaker of the same honor, being one of the seede of that heauenly race: It is an old saying and rightly reported, that Hercules and Bacchus going downe to hell, they were instituted in holly orders, and that they were emboldned to goe thither of the Goddesse Eleusina."

(Variorum Spenser, IX (1949), 37, 11. 363-9).

Though the Axiochus was probably the work of Anthony Munday in collusio with the printer Cuthbert Burby (see M.W.S. Swan, "The Sweet Speech and Spenser's (?) Axiochus," ELH, XI (1944), 161-81), and though 1592 would still be too late a date for the 1590 publication of Book II of the Faerie Queene, Spenser may have known of the pseudo-Platonic dialogue in manuscript. There is a reference in The Teares of the Muses, 11. 457-52, published in the 1591 Complaints, that links Hercules and Bacchus as twin deities and may allude to their Eleusinian initiations, though in context the passage is spoken by Calliope, the muse of euhemeristic heroic narratives.

183 Carl R. Sonn, "Sir Guyon in the Cave of Mammon," SKL, I (1961), i, 17-30, presents Guyon's predicament as a natural man of limited vision, a qualification of Woodhouse's view of Guyon's buoyant self-sufficiency, and gives an accurate reading of the Neo-Platonic love vision of the succouring angel.

184 Conti, Mythologiae, VII.7. Kermode, p. 162, refers to the astronomical interpretations (see for example Fraunce, Third Part of Iuychurc, 46"-47") to interpret the apples as intemperance of the mind, but Spenser's "fruit of gold" seems unequivocal.

185 Sonn, pp. 29-30. The nature of the guardian angel as a type of Venus Urania has been pointed out by Maurice Evans, "Platonic Allegory in The Faerie Queene," RES, n. s. XII (1961), 139.

186 I note in passing that the Palmer uses his staff to make the sea monsters flee from their stations near the Bower of Bliss; the monsters include "Spring-headed Hydraes" (II.xii.23), which as slander and hypocrisy would be suitable for the artificial Bower. The Bower of Bliss is not so much artificiality as it is Excess, however; Acrasia's Bower is an intemperate display, not merely an artificial one—see the recent article by H.P. Guth, "Allegorical Implications of Artifice in Spenser's Faerie Queene," PMLA, LXXVI (1961), 474-9, espec. pp. 477-8, and also Millar Maclure, "Nature and Art in The Faerie Queene," ELH, XXVIII (1961), 8-10.

The Bower of Bliss is deceptive. Within it we find a "pleasant grove" of trees dedicated to Jove and to "his sonne Alcides, whenas hee / Gayned in Nemea goodly victore" (II.v.31). The incongruity is only apparent, however: Acrasia, like Circe, turns men to beasts; Cymoelcs has here become, as Atin mocks, a "womanish weake knight" (II.v.36). The Spenserian forest, of course, is usually a symbol of sexual temptation and lust (see Evans, "Platonic Allegory in The Faerie Queene," pp. 137-8). The Bower's grove of trees dedicated to Hercules serves as a subtle reminder that even the valiant Hercules succumbed to lust and effeminacy. Cymoelcs had fallen here under Acrasia's spell; without earlier divine aid from Arthur and rational aid from the Palmer, Guyon as Hercules would have undoubtedly fallen in Canto XII.
187 Rathborne, pp. 65-113 espec. l11-3. Miss Rathborne also notes Hercules' connections with the world of fairies, pp. 164-7, and points out further, pp. 167-81, that fairy mythology was euhemerized by numerous Renaissance writers, including Spenser.

188 Harry Berger, The Allegorical Temper: Vision and Reality in Book II of Spenser's "Faerie Queene" (New Haven, 1957), pp. 89-114, espec. pp. 107-11, recognizes a difference between the ideal action of the Elfin chronicle and the record of human struggles in the Briton chronicle but relates this difference to a contrast between an innocent self-sufficiency of Guyon the Elfin and a human inadequacy of Arthur. Mr. Berger's study, however, nowhere mentions Miss Rathborne's detailed analysis of the Elfin chronicle and her evidence for the Elfins as euhemeristic figures.

189 Several commentators have interpreted Maleger as original sin: See Woodhouse, pp. 221-2, and Hamilton, "Like Race to Runne," pp. 333-4, where Arthur is further associated with Christ and with Redcrosse against the dragon. Berger, pp. 85-8, rightly notes correspondences between Maleger and Phantasus and relates Arthur's struggle to that of a man burdened with original sin.

190 See Hughes, "The Arthurs of The Faerie Queene," pp. 209, 211, for representative interpretations of the labor and a Pollaiuolo bronze depicting the subject.

191 These etymologies were available in Caxton's Golden Legend; see Susan Synder, "Guyon the Wrestler," Renaissance News, XIV (1961), 249-52.


193 Hughes, "The Arthurs of the Faerie Queene," p. 206, has suggested that the Malengin episode is analogous to Hercules' labors against Cacus.

194 For this topical allegory see Variorum Spenser, V: Commentary on V.x.6-V.xi.33, pp. 249-58; Greenlaw, p. 307; H.S.V. Jones, pp. 317-8; Schulze, p. 319.


198 Roche, pp. 340-1. Aguzzi, "Allegory in the Heroic Poetry of the Renaissance", pp. 406-8, suggests that Spenser knew Giraldi Cintio's *Ercole* and was indebted in the Mask of Cupid to Cintio's description of the palace of Venus, where Juno goes to find a way to subject Hercules to sensuality. Spenser's allusions to Hylas here and also in Book IV (IV.x.27) were apparently taken from Thomas Cooper's *Theaurus* under "Hyla . . . or Hylas;" see Starnes and Talbert, pp. 59-60.

199 Wind, *Pagan Mysteries*, pp. 171-2, cites Spenser's verses here as an unduly obvious example of the Neo-Platonic concept of "unfolding," by which each figure that is mystically related to the Divine Unity is unfolded into its particular form.


202 Evans, "Platonic Allegory in *The Faerie Queene*," pp. 138-9. Evans compares Cambina to the angel that succoured Guyon after the Cave of Mammon episode, and we recall that Guyon as Hercules needed divine aid somewhat as Cambell as Hercules needs Cambina here.


204 The Temple of Venus, then, is the true answer to the Bower of Bliss; this has been recently pointed out by Hans Guth, " Allegorical Implications of Artifice in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*," pp. 478-9.

Rathborne, pp. 93-4, 97-8.

The parallels between this passage and the beginning of Book V of The Faerie Queene are even stronger: Calliope states further that she will deify no more, for the modern age has no worthies comparable to those of the past: the moderns seek only for pleasure and flattery. D.T. Starnes, "Spenser and the Muses," Texas University Studies in English, XXI (1942), 44-58, has considered Calliope the muse not only of heroic poetry but of The Faerie Queene as a whole.

Greenlaw, Studies in Spenser's Historical Allegory, pp. 139-47.

Kuhl, "Hercules in Spenser and Shakespeare, p. 860.

Spenser may have been thinking of Essex as Hercules in the description of the epic arming of Clarion, the butterfly, in Mulineutos. Clarion exists in the Acrasian garden oblivious of evil, "In the pride of his freedome principall" (1.380), and is entrapped by Aragnaol's Satanic web of envy and slander, comparable to the venom of the Blatant Beast or Hydra of Book VI of The Faerie Queene. The poem has been interpreted in various ways, including Professor Allen's recent view of Clarion as the rational soul torn between Wisdom and Pleasure (D.C. Allen, Image and Meaning, (Baltimore, 1960), pp. 20-41; for a complementary approach, emphasizing the principles of metamorphosis and mutability in the poem, see Calvin Edwards, "Spenser and the Ovidian Tradition" (diss. Yale, 1958), pp. 61-73), but we should not exclude the possibility of topical allegory. R. Brice Harris, "The Butterfly in Spenser's Muiopotmos," JEGP, XLIII (1944), 302-16, espec. pp. 307-11, has amassed considerable evidence for Clarion as Essex, with Aragnaol of course as the menacing Lord Burghley. To add further weight to Professor Harris' claims, the arming of Clarion certainly suggests the lion skin prowess and valor of Essex that is later seen in Marston's Metamorphosis of Pigmaion's Image (see above, note 139):

And then about his shoulders broad he threw
An hairie hide of some wilde beast, whom hee
In saluage forrest by aduenture slew,
And reft the spoyle his ornament to bee:
Which spreidding all his backe with dreadfull vew,
Made all that him so horrible did see,
Thinke him Alcides with the Lyons skin,
When the Naemean Conquest he did win. (ll. 65-72)


212 See Greenlaw, pp. 142-3, for these two interpretations.

213 Ibid., p. 145, on the trial of Duessa: "Artegall is no longer Lord Grey, but the Justice and Power that accompany sovereignty, unswayed by prejudice. . . ."

214 See Heffner, pp. 77-82.

215 Tuve, "Spenser's Reading: The De Claris Mulieribus," pp. 150-60, has found this view of Iole as a revengeful princess attempting to gain power through deceit in a 1538 French translation of Boccaccio's work, to which Spenser may have turned. Spenser, however, does not present Artegall as a slave to passion as was Hercules in Boccaccio's version.

216 Williams, "Venus and Diana: Some Uses of Myth in The Faerie Queene," pp. 117-8, has indicated the complementary nature of the Artegall-Britomart union.

217 Hughes, "The Arturhs of the Faerie Queene," p. 205, n. 58, notes that Britomart appears in her fight against Radigund as a Hercules figure similar to the Alcides in Bruno's Lo Spaccio who subdued "a new Amazonian queen and her rebel forces."

218 Israel Baroway, "The Imagery of Spenser and the Song of Songs," JEGP, XXXIII (1934), 41-2.

Either Marlowe or Spenser could have provided the source for a similar passage in "An Epithalamium" attributed to Christopher Brooke and printed in the 1614 edition of *England's Helicon* (1600). The bride is suitably modest on her wedding night:

Now droops our Bride, and in her Virgin state,  
Seemes like Electra 'mongst the Pleyades;  
So shrinkes a Mayde when her Herculean Mate  
Must plucke the fruite in her Hesperides.


The Renaissance, as I have presented it in this study, is bounded by two literary giants, Dante and Spenser. We can perceive the respective differences between Dante of the Middle Ages and Spenser of the Renaissance by placing them side by side. Dante's imagistic realism, though extremely vivid, remains still within the limits of a figural or typological view of the world; transient earthly reality, seen at all points as revelatory of Divine Providence, can be presented to an audience that would immediately respond to its inner meaning, whether that conceptual meaning is explicitly recalled within the poem or not. Hercules, for Dante, is a Christian figura.

For the Renaissance poet, however, the medieval unity of figura is unable to contain all historical and mythical realism within a conceptual framework. Owing to expansive secular and national interests, the growth of historical perspective, and a critical awareness of myth, Spenser cannot rely on his audience for immediate recognition of the conceptual meaning of myth; he must rather present his mythological material in such significant imagistic form that the audience is invariably led to the symbolic intent. Spenser as a Renaissance poet must recreate the Hercules myth by the efforts of his plastic imagination. Dante's material was, in medieval eyes, divine because all reality was essentially God's handiwork, and it is noteworthy that
the Commedia was not specifically tagged as "Divina" until the sixteenth century.¹ Spenser's material, on the other hand, was divine only if Spenser the poet made it so by his mythopoeic powers. Hercules, for Spenser, is not only suggestive of the Christian figura but is also a symbol of heroic imperial ideals and of transcendent harmony, all interlaced within the single mythic figure.² In this multiform context Hercules becomes a symbolic representative of the fecundity of the Renaissance imagination; he is the epitome of harmonious symbolic form to which the Italian Renaissance of the Quattrocento aspired.

Spenser, as a mythopoeic artist, points toward the modern artist's concern for mythic structures and a harmonious vision of the world of mutability. The figural unity of Dante's Middle Ages has been left behind. In place of God the creator and sustainer we find the inspired poet, the artist who recreates the world of shapeless matter and "dead" language into vibrant artistic form. Typological symbolism, in which both image and meaning are historical truths within God's universal plan, is replaced by "metaphoric symbolism," or mythic symbolism, in which the reality of both image and meaning are dependent on the power of the artistic imagination.

This passage from a divinely controlled figural view of reality to an awareness of multiple human points of view and a world of imaginative fecundity cannot be mapped out with undue precision, but perhaps the Renaissance
treatment of classical myth, in this case the figure of Hercules, can help to point the way. The medieval allegorical traditions persist throughout the Renaissance, and we find the typological Hercules in Ronsard and to less extent in Spenser, but the euhemeristic tradition undergoes a marked change. Medieval euhemerism had held Hercules within the universal chronology of the histories; in the Renaissance we find considerable interest in the Hercules myth insofar as it was applicable for national dynastic associations, yet at the same time critical historians became increasingly skeptical of the myth's historicity. By the end of the sixteenth century many of the euhemerized Hercules legends were discounted as false superstitions or as corrupt versions of Biblical truth: Hercules was in actuality a distorted Greek version of Samson. By thus denying the historical validity of Hercules the figural relevance of the myth was lost. Typological potential was still possible when Hercules was recognized as another form of Samson or Joshua, but the pagan myth was no longer seen to contain a core of historical truth. The Hercules myth had passed from the medieval context of euhemeristic and typological reality to the Renaissance context of the poetic imagination. Spenser can call upon the multiple interpretations of Hercules and coalesce them into an archetypal symbol of heroic endeavor that is yet a particular creation of the individual poet. This is Dante's "allegory of poets," and yet Spenser's creative imagination sustains
Hercules' spiritual power in a vision of transcendent Concord that itself points toward the eschatological eternal rest of "that Sabaoths sight."

Our limits in this study have been from Dante to Spenser, or from 1300 to 1600, but of course history never bows to our human hypotheses as readily and as consistently as we might wish. There were Renaissance beginnings before Dante, and there were Renaissance endings long after Spenser. But the center of the Renaissance, in Italy, France, and England, is held within these arbitrary chronological limits--certainly the Hercules myth has reached its Renaissance zenith with the Pléiade poets and with Spenser. By 1600 the direction is progressively toward a Christian focus and a satiric denigration of myth, as seen in Tasso and Du Bartas and as can be traced later in such as Burton or Milton. Carew's well-known elegy spoke of Donne having banished the "goodly exil'd traine / Of gods and goddesses;"³ by the time of Milton pagan mythology was subordinated to the "one true history" of the Christian story. The Neo-Platonic influence in England is still strong, and we find Chapman and Jonson treating Hercules as a symbolic hero while the compendia of Henry Reynolds and Alexander Ross, together with the Sandys edition of Ovid, keep the main interpretative traditions alive, but the Hercules figure will not again play the dominant role of the national
and virtuous symbolic hero that he did in the poetry of Pierre Ronsard and Edmund Spenser. Mythology is now relegated to the unreal world of fancy; the Hercules legends are mere heathen fables that will not withstand the seventeenth-century attacks of the critical rationalists and the satirists. By 1600 these trends are apparent, and by this time the Renaissance world has passed its peak.
NOTES

1 See C. Singleton, "The Irreducible Dove," p. 135. The epithet "Divina" was first attached to the poem in the edition of 1555.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BHR</td>
<td>Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CL</td>
<td>Comparative Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLQ</td>
<td>Huntington Library Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAAC</td>
<td>Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JEGP</td>
<td>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JHI</td>
<td>Journal of the History of Ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWCI</td>
<td>Journal of the Warburg and Courtland Institutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLN</td>
<td>Modern Language Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLQ</td>
<td>Modern Language Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Modern Philology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>Patrologia Graeca, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris, 1857–)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Patrologia Latina, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris, 1844)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ</td>
<td>Philological Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMLA</td>
<td>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RES</td>
<td>Review of English Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEL</td>
<td>Studies in English Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Studies in Philology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTQ</td>
<td>University of Toronto Quarterly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

I have listed here those secondary studies that I found most helpful and cited primary works of the Middle Ages and Renaissance that contain explicit reference to the Hercules myth. Fuller documentation will be found in the notes.


AESOPI FRYGIS FABULAE. Cambridge, 1635.


Archipresbyter Leo, Der Alexanderroman, ed. Friedrich Pfister. Heidelberg, 1913.


——. "Enobarbus' Description of Cleopatra," *Texas Studies in English*, XXXVII (1953), 61-78.


Berenson, B. The Drawings of the Florentine Painters. 3 vols. Chicago, 1938.


Bradbrook, Miriel C. *The School of Night*. Cambridge, 1936.


—. *Shakespeare's "Histories."* San Marino, Calif., 1947.


——. Ronsard et son Temps. Paris, 1925.


——. A Discourse of Life and Death, trans. the Countess of Pembroke. London, 1592.


——. *A Sermesful Image... Called Sileni Alcibiadis*, trans. into English. STC 10507.


Giralði, Lilio Gregorio. *De Deis Gentium Libri Sive Syntagma* XVII. Lyon, 1565.


Harris, Victor. All Coherence Gone. Chicago, 1940.


———. The Example of Vertu. London, 1510.


——. The Waning of the Middle Ages. London, 1924.


——. The Youth of Erasmus. Ann Arbor, 1930.


Lear, Floyd S. "The Medieval Attitude Toward History," The Rice Institute Pamphlet, XX (1933), 156-77.

Lebègue, Raymond. "Rabelais, the Last of the French Erasmians," JMSCI, XII (1949), 91-100.


Meech, Sanford B. "Chaucer and the Ovide Moralisé," *PMLA* XLVI (1931), 182-204.


Morreale, Margherita. "Coluccio Salutati's De Laboribus Hercules (1406) and Enrique De Villeda's Los Doce Trabajos De Hercules (1417)," *SP*, LI (1954), 95-106.


Pasquiere in a Traunce, trans. W.P. London, 1556?


——. *Opere*. Basle, 1581.


Schepps, G. "Zu König Alfrids Boethius," *Archiv,* XCV (1895), 149-60.


Tate, J. "On the History of Allegorism," *Classical Quarterly*, XXVIII (1934), 105-14.


Utley, Francis L. The Crooked Rib. Columbus, 1944.


White, C.B. "Richard Tavener's Interpretation of Erasmius in Proverbs or Adages," PMLA, LIX (1944), 928-43.


——. "Queen Elizabeth as Astraea," JWCI, X (1947), 27-82.